Historical Materialism 375

Historical-Critical Dictionary of Marxism

A Selection, VOLUME 2

Edited by
Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Frigga Haug, Peter Jehle,
Wolfgang Küttler, Oliver Walkenhorst

English selection edited by
Konstantin Baehrens, Juha Koivisto, Victor Strazzeri

BRILL

Historical-Critical Dictionary of Marxism

Historical Materialism Book Series

Editorial Board

Loren Balhorn (*Berlin*)
David Broder (*Rome*)
Sebastian Budgen (*Paris*)
Steve Edwards (*London*)
Juan Grigera (*London*)
Kaan Kangal (*Nanjing*)
Marcel van der Linden (*Amsterdam*)
Panagiotis Sotiris (*Athens*)
Peter Thomas (*London*)
Gavin Walker (*New York*)

VOLUME 375

The titles published in this series are listed at *brill.com/hm*

Historical-Critical Dictionary of Marxism

A Selection, Volume 2

General Editors

Wolfgang Fritz Haug
Frigga Haug
Peter Jehle
Wolfgang Küttler
Oliver Walkenhorst

Volume Editors

Konstantin Baehrens
Juha Koivisto
Victor Strazzeri

BRILL

LEIDEN | BOSTON

This is an open access title distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license, which permits any non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided no alterations are made and the original author(s) and source are credited. Further information and the complete license text can be found at https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/

The terms of the CC license apply only to the original material. The use of material from other sources (indicated by a reference) such as diagrams, illustrations, photos and text samples may require further permission from the respective copyright holder.

This edition is part of the project 'Internationalisation of the Historical-Critical Dictionary of Marxism', funded by the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung with the support of the Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) of the Federal Republic of Germany.

ROSA LUXEMBURG STIFTUNG

The Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data is available online at https://catalog.loc.gov

Typeface for the Latin, Greek, and Cyrillic scripts: "Brill". See and download: brill.com/brill-typeface.

ISSN 1570-1522
ISBN 978-90-04-75495-9 (hardback)
ISBN 978-90-04-75496-6 (e-book)
DOI 10.1163/9789004754966

Copyright 2026 by Berliner Institut für kritische Theorie e.V.. Published by Koninklijke Brill BV, Plantijnstraat 2, 2321 JC Leiden, The Netherlands.
Koninklijke Brill BV incorporates the imprints Brill, Brill Nijhoff, Brill Schöningh, Brill Fink, Brill mentis, Brill Wageningen Academic, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Böhlau and V&R unipress.
Koninklijke Brill BV reserves the right to protect this publication against unauthorized use.
For more information: info@brill.com.

This book is printed on acid-free paper and produced in a sustainable manner.

Contents

About this Edition IX
Konstantin Baehrens, Juha Koivisto, and Victor Strazzeri
List of Abbreviations and Scribal Abbreviations XIV
Notes on Contributors XXVIII

1 Agrarian Question 1
Theodor Bergmann

2 Black Marxism 9
Hans Gustav Klaus

3 *Capital*-Editions 13
Thomas Marxhausen

4 Class Struggle 40
Colin Barker, Werner Goldschmidt, and Wolfram Adolphi

5 Climate Politics 75
Oliver Walkenhorst

6 Colonial Mode of Production 96
Bastiaan Wielenga

7 Conjuncture, Politico-historical 104
Juha Koivisto and Mikko Lahtinen

8 Critique of Globalisation 121
Ulrich Brand

9 Dependency Theory 130
Jan Otto Andersson

10 Development 136
Sven-Eric Liedman, Thomas Marxhausen, and Wolfgang Fritz Haug

11 Disposable Time 149
Volker Gransow, Gunter Willing, and Frigga Haug

12 Division of Labour 158
Frigga Haug

13 Eurocentrism 176
Gunter Willing

14 Everyday 185
Peter Jehle

15 Family Work, Domestic Labour, Housework 192
Frigga Haug

16 Fetish Character of the Commodity 203
Thomas Marxhausen

17 Free Trade 215
Michael Krätke and Gunter Willing

18 Gender 228
Donna Haraway and Andrea Maihofer

19 Geopolitics 246
Benno Teschke

20 German Misery, German Wretchedness 260
Helmut Peitsch

21 Haitian Revolution 272
Sibylle Fischer

22 Hegemonic Apparatus 280
Stefan Bollinger and Juha Koivisto

23 Humanity 292
Wolfram Adolphi and Victor Strazzeri

24 Immaterial Labour 304
Wolfgang Fritz Haug

25 International Women's Day 317
Victor Rego Diaz and Antje Schmitt

26 International Relations 324
Stephen Gill

27 Labour Movement 339
Georg Fülberth

28 Land Reform 352
Helmut Arnold

29 Materialise / Materialisation 356
Wolfgang Fritz Haug

30 Materialism, Practical-Dialectical 362
Wolfgang Fritz Haug

31 Memory Work, Effort of Remembering 384
Susan Kippax

32 Primary Valorisation 391
Christoph Görg

33 Putting-Out, Homeworking, Outwork / Telework 397
Ursula Huws and Mario Candeias

34 Remembrance 410
Frigga Haug

35 Social Formation 423
Wolfgang Küttler

36 Socially Necessary Labour / Labour Time 436
Frigga Haug and Paresh Chattopadhyay

37 Trade 448
Mario Candeias and Gerhard Hanappi

38 Witch 460
Frigga Haug, Dagmar Engelken, and Montserrat Galcerán

39 Witch Hunt 472
Claudia Opitz

References to the Original Publications 481
Index of Names 485

About this Edition

This second volume of selected articles in English translation from the German-language *Historisch-kritisches Wörterbuch des Marxismus* (HKWM), published by the Berlin Institute for Critical Theory (InkriT), continues the endeavour to compile relevant articles of this long-standing lexicon project for an international readership.[1] As a dictionary based on concepts, schools of thought or -isms take precedence over individual theorists and their biographies. Entries are not divided by country or academic discipline but follow, rather, a philological orientation, focused on reconstructing concepts' development and the various disputes encountered along the way. Instead of steadfast definitions, the goal is to produce critical knowledge on the trajectory of Marxist thought and the wide range of problems it has grappled with historically. The historical-critical approach means sifting through the concepts, their contested history, and their current relevance from the perspective of the pressing need for a solidary and ecologically sustainable economy and societal form.

The aim of the selection is to offer readers a broad and relevant sample of the HKWM's open, self-developing and self-critical Marxism. It gathers concepts pertaining to labour and political economy, gender relations and ecology, history and memory as well as to the critical-philosophical legacy of historical materialism. Moreover, as a publication resulting from the project 'Internationalisation of the Historical-Critical Dictionary of Marxism' (2019–2024),[2] the selection both had a mandate to and sought to critically reflect on issues of international relations and geopolitics, globalisation and trade as well as on colonialism and anti-colonial struggles.[3] Many of these entries – published from the mid-1990s to the early-2000s – have gained renewed actuality in a context of geopolitical realignments, shifting North-South relations, trade disputes, rearmament and wars.

---

1 A first selection comprising 30 entries was published in 2023 as part of the Historical Materialism book series: *Historical-Critical Dictionary of Marxism: A Selection* (Leiden: Brill). The volume contains extensive material discussing the HKWM and its history by its founding editor Wolfgang Fritz Haug as well as other participants of the lexicon initiative. A paperback edition by Haymarket Books followed in 2024. The publication is available for download in Open Access under https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004679023.

2 The project was overseen by InkriT and involved an international team of collaborators and translators based in Western Europe and Latin America.

3 The project was funded by the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation with the support of the Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) of the Federal Republic of Germany.

The HKWM is over a third of a century old. Like the great *Encyclopédie* of Diderot and d'Alembert (work on which began in 1745), that started as a translation and enlargement of Ephraim Chambers's *Cyclopaedia, or an Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences* (1728), the HKWM also grew out of a translation initiative; namely, as supplement volumes to the German translation of Georges Labica's and Gérard Bensussan's *Dictionnaire critique du marxisme* (1st edition 1982). The planned supplement articles grew in number and in 1989, as the last volume of the French lexicon's translation came out, the publication plan of a new dictionary project under the editorship of Wolfgang Fritz Haug was announced. The timing could hardly have been less favourable; despite the hopes of reform raised by *perestroika* in the Soviet Union, the comprehensive downfall of state-administrative socialism in Europe followed.

That epochal shift did not bring – as some then predicted – the terminal crisis of Marxism. Absent its erstwhile bureaucratic patrons, from 1989 onwards new possibilities for cooperation and critique opened up for Marxist thought. In fact, the sudden and violent nature of capitalist restoration in the formerly socialist countries – with major social and political ramifications lasting well into the present – in addition to a continued string of crises in the capitalist periphery in the 1990s and in its very core in 2008 have since only underscored the value of Marxism's critical legacy. The survival of Marxist thought "after the deluge" is, however, also rooted in its global geography. Marxism was never confined within the borders of a single country (or the socialist world). Political repression in the German lands, especially after the defeat of the 1848–49 revolutions (see 'German Misery, German Wretchedness') had forced Marx and Engels to elaborate their theory in various countries of exile, bringing together the different sources and components of historical materialism during their time in France, Belgium, and, especially, England. The worldwide reception and further development of their ideas, in turn, brought new questions, approaches, and sometimes uneven solutions and contested directions.

From the outset, the dictionary project strove to reflect the global scope and diversity of the Marxist tradition by fashioning itself as an international endeavour. Thus, while the two English-language selections, as well as four thematic ones in Spanish published since 2022 were enabled by the recent 'Internationalisation' project, they embody the HKWM's original global orientation.[4]

4 The project also contributed to the ongoing initiative to translate the HKWM in its entirety into Mandarin led by a team at Peking University which has so far produced three translated volumes of the German lexicon.

Long intervals between the genesis of entries and their publication in translated form have brought their own asynchronicities. The article 'Land Reform', for instance, was written in 1984. In connection with the dissolution of the European socialist states, the land reform issue gained new dimensions – as exemplified by the change in land law in the former GDR – meaning that the entry would have been written differently only a few years later. There have also been considerable advances in research since many of these entries were produced. This is exemplified by Silvia Federici's major contributions to the subject-matter of 'Witch' and 'Witch Hunt', as Montserrat Galcerán and Claudia Opitz, the authors of those entries, have asked us to highlight. It is, however, in the nature of any lexicon to be gradually overtaken by events and new scholarship. This was one of the reasons why we asked all the authors we were still able to contact to refrain from updating their articles.

That does not mean, however, that the dictionary is rendered entirely "out of date". Indeed, as a Marxist lexicon, the entries' historicity is not a burden or blemish, but an integral part of its constitution. These are entries openly written out of the situated engagement of their authors and editors with the questions of their time. While some issues have shifted, the fundamental question of how to decipher (in order to overcome) the capitalist social order has remained, which is precisely what allows them to maintain their relevance decades after their making. For a more in-depth consideration of the history and specificities of the HKWM and the current status of the project we suggest readers visit the InkriT's webpage (www.inkrit.de – also available in English, Spanish, and Turkish), the Internationalisation project's blog (hkwm.blog – also available in English and Spanish) and consult the extensive apparatus included in the first volume of English translations, referenced earlier.

Beyond these factors, to understand the present selection, a few peculiar circumstances must be considered. First, the original edition is still in progress, having only recently passed its alphabetical halfway point in German. Since the first English-language selection's publication, volume 9/II of the HKWM, covering terms from 'Mitleid' (Compassion) to 'Nazismus' (Nazism), was published; volume 10/I – which deals with topics such as "neoimperialism" and "neoliberalism" and encompasses several keywords pertaining to "ecology" and "ecosocialism" – is currently in preparation. Yet the final German volume (15) is not expected to appear until the 2030s or even 40s. As a result, some undoubtedly relevant entries, which are not ready for publication, could not be included.

Second, because of the different alphabetical assignments of lemmas in German and English ('Alltag' translates to 'Everyday', 'Klassenkampf' to 'Class Struggle'), articles have shifted back and forth from their original order. The

context of each entry's publication can, however, be learned from an index included in the appendix to the present edition, indicating the original volume and the year of first publication.

In addition, as in the original edition, further HKWM lemmas are listed (in German and English translation) at the end of each entry as cross-references that are related to the content of the entry in question, so that interested readers can delve further into the subject.

The formal guidelines of this edition are based on those of the original HKWM, although some adaptations were necessary. The most basic formal criteria are the following:

Titles of entries: Lemmas of two or more terms are separated by a slash if they represent complementary pairs of concepts (e.g., 'Materialise / Materialisation'), and by a comma if they represent alternative forms of expression (e.g., 'German Misery, German Wretchedness'). As is usual for a dictionary, a comma in the title can also be followed by specifying adjectives (e.g., 'Conjuncture, Politico-historical').

Equivalents in other languages: For the lemma in the title of each entry, equivalents in five other languages are given: Arabic (A, in transcription), French (F), German (G), Russian (R, in transcription), Spanish (S), and Chinese (C, in transcription and in ideograms).

Abbreviations: Instead of the full lemma in the title, an initialism in capital letters appears throughout the body of the article. This initialism is also used within citations to emphasise the thematic focus of each article. (Apart from the abbreviation 'cent.' for 'century', no other changes have been made within quotations unless otherwise stated). All other abbreviations are in common use or are listed in the lists of abbreviations and scribal abbreviations.

Emphasis: Names of persons are rendered in boldface when they are mentioned for the first time within a paragraph or when another name has been mentioned directly before. All other emphasis is italicised.

Quotations: Regular quotation marks '…' indicate quotations (with the exception of those in Ancient Greek); double quotation marks "…" indicate meta-linguistic usages or terms used with a certain distance. Interpolations within quotations are marked with square brackets [ ]; omissions with ellipses in square brackets […].

Citation method: References to works and editions that are frequently cited in the HKWM are indicated by scribal abbreviations (see list of scribal abbreviations). Otherwise, citations are made as follows: The author's name, the year of publication, and the page reference appear in brackets after the citation; if the immediately following references relate to the same author and/or the same work, the author's name and/or the corresponding year of publication are not

repeated. Literature not marked with a scribal abbreviation is listed at the end of each entry in the bibliography.

Classical philosophical works are cited, if possible, with indication of articles, paragraphs, etc., so that the cited passage can be found in different editions.

Bibliography: The works cited are listed in alphabetical order by author's name. In the case of several titles by the same author, in chronological order. Only directly or indirectly cited or used literature is included (as far as it is not already mentioned in the general list of scribal abbreviations). The years of the original edition are given in brackets where appropriate.

Editions used: Wherever possible, quotations from existing translations into English have been used. Only when no translations were available or the available English-language editions are deemed problematic have quotations been translated for this publication. References to the German editions of Marx and Engels (MEW and MEGA), to *Gesammelte Schriften* or *Collected Works* by different authors (GS or CW) have been retained, as these editions are also consulted by English-speaking scholars, students, teachers, and researchers.

On a final note, this publication is very much an invitation: we encourage interested readers to join in and support the collective and international endeavour of producing the HKWM. More information on how to contribute can be found on the InkriT's homepage.

Konstantin Baehrens, Juha Koivisto, Victor Strazzeri

Abbreviations and Scribal Abbreviations

Abbreviations

acc.	according
a.o.	and others
App.	Apparatus
Art.	Article
AS	Argument Sonderband (Special Issue)
b.	born in
B.C.	before the Christian Era
Berlin/W	West Berlin
CC	Central Committee
CDU	Christian Democratic Union of Germany
cent.	century
cf.	compare
ch.	chapter
cit.	cited
col.	column
Comintern	Communist International
comm.	commented
CP	Communist Party – (except for chapter 5: Climate Politics)
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CPUSA	Communist Party of the United States of America
CW	Collected Works
ed.	edited by
ed., eds.	editor, editors
edn.	edition
Eng.	English
enl.	enlarged
esp.	especially
et al.	et alii
et sq.	et sequens
et sqq.	et sequentes
fn.	footnote
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
GDR	German Democratic Republic
Ger.	German
Gk.	Greek

GNP	Gross National Product
GS	Gesammelte Schriften (Collected Writings)
ibid.	ibidem
id.	idem
IMES	Internationale Marx-Engels-Stiftung, Amsterdam
IML	Institute of Marxism-Leninism
introd.	introduction by
IWA	International Workingmen's Association
KPD	Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands (Communist Party of Germany)
Lett.	Letters
ML	Marxism-Leninism
NEP	New Economic Policy
NSDAP	Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (National-Socialist German Workers' Party, Nazi Party)
no.	number
PCF	Parti communiste français (French Communist Party)
PCI	Partito Comunista Italiano (Italian Communist Party)
PRC	People's Republic of China
PSI	Partito Socialista Italiano
pub.	published
qtd.	quoted
repr.	reprint
rev.	revised
Russ.	Russian
SED	Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands (Socialist Unity Party of Germany)
SelWks	Selected Works
SelWr	Selected Writings
SI	Socialist International
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (Social Democratic Party of Germany)
SU	Soviet Union
suppl.	supplement
transl.	translated by
transl. corr.	translation corrected
transl. mod.	translation modified
UN	United Nations
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
vol.	Volume
W	Werke

Scribal Abbreviations

1 *Lexica, Dictionaries, and Collections of Texts*

EE *Europäische Enzyklopädie zu Philosophie und Wissenschaften*, ed. H.J. Sandkühler, 4 vols., Hamburg 1990.

Etymol WB W. Pfeifer, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Deutschen*, 2 vols., Berlin/GDR 1989, 2nd rev. and enl. edn., Berlin 1993.

Georges K.E. Georges, *Ausführliches Lateinisch-Deutsches Handwörterbuch*, 2 vols., Hanover-Leipzig[8] 1913.

GG *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, ed. O. Brunner, W. Conze, and R. Koselleck, 8 vols., Stuttgart 1974–97.

Grimm J. and W. Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, ed. by the German Akademie der Wissenschaften (AdW) at Berlin, 16 vols., Leipzig 1854–1960, continued from vol. 4.1.4 onwards by H. Wunderlich et al.; new rev. edn. by the AdW of the GDR in cooperation with the AdW at Göttingen, Leipzig 1965 et sqq.

HKWM *Historisch-kritisches Wörterbuch des Marxismus*, ed. W.F. Haug and (since vol. 7/1) F. Haug and P. Jehle and (since vol. 8/1) W. Küttler (†) and (since vol. 9/11) O. Walkenhorst, Berlin-Hamburg 1994 et sqq.

HWPh *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, ed. J. Ritter (†), K. Gründer, and G. Gabriel, 12 vols., Basel 1971–2004, vol. 13 (index) ed. M. Kranz, Basel 2007.

KWM *Kritisches Wörterbuch des Marxismus*, ed. G. Labica and G. Bensussan, Ger. version ed. W.F. Haug, 8 vols., Berlin/W-Hamburg 1983–89 (*Dictionnaire critique du marxisme*, Paris 1982,[2] 1985).

LS *Lexikon des Sozialismus*, ed. Th. Meyer et al., Cologne 1986.

PhWb *Philosophisches Wörterbuch* (1964), ed. M. Buhr and G. Klaus, 2 vols., 10th enl. edn., Leipzig 1974.

2 *Periodicals and Series of Books*

Argument *Das Argument: Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Sozialwissenschaften*, Berlin/W 1959 et sqq.

BB *Berliner Beiträge zur kritischen Theorie*, ed. Berlin Institute of Critical Theory, Hamburg 1999 et sqq.

Blätter *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik*, Cologne 1956 et sqq.

Grünberg-Archiv *Archiv für die Geschichte des Sozialismus und der Arbeiterbewegung*, ed. C. Grünberg, Leipzig 1911–30.

INITIAL *Berliner Debatte INITIAL: Zeitschrift für sozialwissenschaftlichen Diskurs*, Berlin 1990 et sqq.

KZfSS *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, Cologne 1948 et sqq.

MEF *Beiträge zur Marx-Engels-Forschung*, ed. IML, CC of the SED, Marx/Engels-Department, Berlin/GDR 1977–90; *Neue Folge*, ed. C.-E. Vollgraf, R. Sperl, R. Hecker, Berlin-Hamburg 1991 et sqq.

MEJb *Marx-Engels-Jahrbuch*, vols. 1–11 ed. IML, CC of the CPSU and IML, CC of the SED, vol. 12 ed. IML, CC of the CPSU and of the Institut für Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung Berlin, Berlin/GDR 1977–90; *MEJb* 2003 et sqq., ed. IMES, Berlin 2004 et sqq.

MR *Monthly Review: An Independent Socialist Magazine*, ed. L. Huberman et al., New York 1949 et sqq.

NLR *New Left Review*, London 1960 et sqq., since 2000 new series.

NZ *Die Neue Zeit*, Stuttgart 1883–1923.

Prokla *Probleme des Klassenkampfs: Zeitschrift für politische Ökonomie und sozialistische Politik*, Berlin/W 1971 et sqq., since 1992 with the subtitle *Zeitschrift für kritische Sozialwissenschaften*, Münster.

ZfS *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, Leipzig 1932, Paris 1933 et sqq., New York 1939–41.

3 *Editions and Titles of Works*

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels

18.B Marx, 'Der 18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte' (1852), MEW 8/111–207, MEGA I.11/96–189; Eng. 'The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte', MECW 11/99–197.

AD Engels, *Herrn Eugen Dührings Umwälzung der Wissenschaft* (1878), MEW 20/5–303, MEGA I.27/217–538; Eng. *Anti-Dühring: Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science*, MECW 25/1–309.

AMI *Karl Marx: Exzerpte über Arbeitsteilung, Maschinerie und Industrie*, historical-critical edn., transcr. and ed. R. Winkelmann, Frankfurt/M-Berlin/W-Vienna 1982.

C I Marx, *Das Kapital. Kritik der politischen Ökonomie. Erster Band. Buch I: Der Produktionsprozess des Kapitals* (1867, ^{2}1872); Eng. *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy. Volume I*, transl. B. Fowkes, London 1976.

C II Marx, *Das Kapital. Kritik der politischen Ökonomie. Zweiter Band. Buch II: Der Zirkulationsprozess des Kapitals*, ed. F. Engels (1885, ^{2}1893); Eng. *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy. Volume II*, transl. D. Fernbach, London 1978.

C III Marx, *Das Kapital. Kritik der politischen Ökonomie. Dritter Band. Buch III: Der Gesamtprozess der kapitalistischen Produktion*, ed. F. Engels (1894); Eng. *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy. Volume III*, transl. D. Fernbach, London 1981.

CCPE Marx, Zur *Kritik der politischen Ökonomie* (1859), MEW 13/3–160, MEGA II.2/95–245; Eng. *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy. Part One*, MECW 29/257–417.

CHPL Marx, 'Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie. Einleitung' (1844), MEW 1/378–91, MEGA I.2/170–83; Eng. 'Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law. Introduction', MECW 3/175–87.

CHPS Marx, 'Kritik des Hegelschen Staatsrechts' (1843, first pub. 1927), MEW 1/203–333, MEGA I.2/3–137 (Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie); Eng. 'Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of the State', MECW 3/3–129.

Civil War Marx, *Der Bürgerkrieg in Frankreich* (1871), MEW 17/313–65, MEGA I.22/179–226; Eng. *The Civil War in France*, MECW 22/307–59.

Class Struggles Marx, 'Die Klassenkämpfe in Frankreich 1848–1850' (1850), MEW 7/9–107, MEGA I.10/119–96 (parts I–III); Eng. 'The Class Struggles in France, 1848 to 1850', MECW 10/45–145.

Condition Engels, *Die Lage der arbeitenden Klasse in England* (1845), MEW 2/225–506; Eng. *The Condition of the Working-Class in England*, MECW 4/295–596.

CPE Critique of Political Economy

DFJB *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*, ed. A. Ruge and K. Marx, 1st and 2nd instalment, Paris 1844.

DI, Hiromatsu Marx, Engels, *Die deutsche Ideologie. Neuveröffentlichung des Abschnittes 1 des Bandes 1 mit textkritischen Anmerkungen*, ed. W. Hiromatsu, Tokyo 1974.

Difference Marx, *Differenz der demokritischen und epikureischen Naturphilosophie* (doctoral dissertation, 1840–41), MEW 40/257–373, MEGA I.1/5–92; Eng. *Difference Between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature*, MECW 1/25–107.

DN Engels, *Dialektik der Natur* (1873–83, first pub. 1925 titled *Dialektik und Natur*), MEW 20/305–570, MEGA I.26; Eng. *Dialectics of Nature*, MECW 25/311–699.

Erfurt Engels, 'Zur Kritik des sozialdemokratischen Programmentwurfs 1891' (1891), MEW 22/225–40; Eng. 'A Critique of the Draft Social-Democratic Programme of 1891', MECW 27/217–32.

Ethnol *Karl Marx: Die ethnologischen Exzerpthefte*, ed. L. Krader, Frankfurt/M 1976 (modernised and Germanised edn.).

Ethnol Nbks *Karl Marx: The Ethnological Notebooks*, ed., transcr., and with an introd. by L. Krader, Assen 1972.

Formen *Karl Marx über Formen vorkapitalistischer Produktion*, ed. H.-P. Harstick, Frankfurt/M 1977.

GI Marx, Engels, *Die deutsche Ideologie* (1845/46), first pub.: Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Historisch-kritische Gesamtausgabe. Werke, Schriften, Briefe* (MEGA[1]), comm. by the Marx-Engels-Lenin-Institute Moscow, ed. V.V. Adoratskij, vol. 5, Berlin 1932; MEW 3/9–530, *MEJb* 2003; Eng. *The German Ideology*, MECW 5/19–539.

Gotha Marx, 'Kritik des Gothaer Programms' (1875, first pub. 1890/91), MEW 19/11–32, MEGA I.25/3–25; Eng. 'Critique of the Gotha Programme', MECW 24/75–99.

Gr Marx, 'Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie (Rohentwurf)' (first pub. 1939/41), Berlin/GDR 1953; new edn. MEW 42/47–768 (1983) and MEGA II.1.1–2, 49–747; Eng. 'Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy (Rough Draft of 1857–58)', First Instalment, transl. E. Wangermann, MECW 28/49–537; Second Instalment, transl. V. Schmittke, MECW 29/5–253.

HF Engels, Marx, *Die Heilige Familie* (1845), MEW 2/3–223; Eng. *The Holy Family*, MECW 4/5–211.

Inaugural Address Marx, *Inauguraladresse der Internationalen Arbeiter-Assoziation* (1864), MEW 16/3–13, MEGA I.20/3–12 (Eng.), 16–25 (Ger.); Eng. *Inaugural Address of the International Working Men's Association*, MECW 20/5–13.

Intro 57 Marx, 'Einleitung [zu den "Grundrissen der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie"]' (1857), *Gr*, 3–31, MEW 42/15–45 (also 13/615–42), MEGA II.1.1/17–45; Eng. 'Introduction' [Economic Manuscripts of 1857–58], MECW 28/17–48.

Jewish Question Marx, 'Zur Judenfrage' (1844), MEW 1/347–77, MEGA I.2/141–69; Eng. 'On the Jewish Question', MECW 3/146–74.

LF Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach und der Ausgang der klassischen deutschen Philosophie* (1886), MEW 21/259–307; Eng. *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*, MECW 26/353–98.

Manifesto Marx, Engels, *Manifest der kommunistischen Partei* (1848), MEW 4/459–93; Eng. *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, MECW 6/477–519.

MECW *Marx and Engels Collected Works*, 50 vols., Moscow-London-New York, 1975–2005.

MEGA *Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe*, ed. IML, CC of the CPSU and IML, CC of the SED, Berlin/GDR-Moscow 1975–89, since 1992 ed. IMES, Berlin-Amsterdam (=MEGA[2]); (MEGA[1]: ed. D. Rjazanow / V. Adoratskij, Frankfurt/M, Berlin, Moscow 1927–40).

MEW *Marx-Engels Werke*, vols. 1–42, ed. IML, CC of the SED, Berlin/GDR 1957 et sqq., new edn. since 1990 and vol. 43 ed. by Institut für Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung, Berlin.

Ms 44 Marx, Ökonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte aus dem Jahre 1844 (first pub. 1932, MEGA[1] I.3), MEW 40/465–588, MEGA I.2/187–438; Eng. Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, MECW 3/229–346.

Ms 61–63 Marx, 'Zur Kritik der politischen Ökonomie (Manuskripte 1861–1863)', MEGA II.3.1–6; part 1 also in MEW 43; Eng. 'A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy (Economic Manuscript of 1861–1863)', MECW, vols. 30–34.

Ms 63–67 Marx, 'Ökonomische Manuskripte 1863–1867', MEGA II.4.1 and II.4.2.

NRhZ Marx, Engels, Artikel aus der *Neuen Rheinischen Zeitung* (1848/49), MEW 5/11–457, 6/5–519; Eng. Articles from the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, MECW 7/15–506, 8/3–480, 9/3–467.

Origin Engels, *Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigentums und des Staates* (1884), MEW 21/25–173, MEGA I.29; Eng. *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, MECW 26/129–276.

Original Text Marx, Fragment des Urtextes von *Zur Kritik der politischen Ökonomie* (1858), *Gr*, 869–947, MEGA II.2/17–94; Eng. The Original Text of the Second and the Beginning of the Third Chapter of *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, MECW 29/430–510.

Outlines Engels, 'Umrisse zu einer Kritik der Nationalökonomie' (1844), MEW 1/499–524, MEGA I.3/467–94; Eng. 'Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy', MECW 3/418–43.

Peasant Question Engels, 'Die Bauernfrage in Frankreich und Deutschland' (1894), MEW 22/483–505; Eng. 'The Peasant Question in France and Germany', MECW 27/481–502.

Peasant War Engels, 'Der deutsche Bauernkrieg' (1850), MEW 7/327–413, MEGA I.10/367–443; Eng. 'The Peasant War in Germany', MECW 10/397–482.

Poverty Marx, *Das Elend der Philosophie* (1847), MEW 4/63–182; Eng. *The Poverty of Philosophy*, MECW 6/105–212.

Pref 59 Marx, 'Vorwort' to *Zur Kritik der politischen Ökonomie* (1859), MEW 13/7–11, MEGA II.2/99–103; Eng. 'Preface' to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. Part One, MECW 29/261–65.

Rules Marx, 'Provisorische Statuten der Internationalen Arbeiter-Assoziation' (1864), MEW 16/14–16, MEGA I.20/13–15 (Eng.), 54–56 (Ger.); Eng. 'Provisional Rules of the International Working Men's Association', MECW 20/14–16.

TechExz *Karl Marx: Die technologisch-historischen Exzerpte*, historical-critical edn., transcr. and ed. H.-P. Müller, Frankfurt/M-Berlin/W-Vienna 1982.

ThF Marx, 'Thesen über Feuerbach' (1845, first pub. 1888), MEW 3/5–7, MEGA IV.3/19–21 (ed. Engels 1888, MEW 3/533–35, MECW 5/6–8); Eng. 'Theses on Feuerbach', MECW 5/3–5.

TSV Marx, *Theorien über den Mehrwert* (1862/63, first pub. 1905–10 by K. Kautsky), MEW 26.1–3, MEGA II.3; Eng. *Theories of Surplus Value*, 3 vols., ed. S. Rayazanskaya, transl. from the German by E. Burns, R. Simpson, J. Cohen, S. Rayazanskaya, MECW, vols. 30–32.

Utopian Engels, *Die Entwicklung des Sozialismus von der Utopie zur Wissenschaft* (1880), MEW 19/177–228, MEGA I.27/583–627; Eng. *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, MECW 24/281–325.

Value Marx, *Lohn, Preis und Profit* (1865, first pub. 1898), MEW 16/101–52, MEGA I.20/141–86 (Eng.), II.4.1/383–432 (Eng.); Eng. *Value, Price and Profit*, MECW 20/101–49.

Wage Labour Marx, 'Lohnarbeit und Kapital' (1849), 6/397–423; Eng. 'Wage Labour and Capital', MECW 9/197–228.

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin

CapR *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* (1899), CW 3, 21–607.

ECont *The Economic Content of Narodism and the Criticism of it in Mr. Struve's Book* (1895), CW 1, 333–507.

FP *What the 'Friends of the People' Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats* (1894), CW 1, 129–332.

Imp *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1917), CW 22, 185–304.

CW *Collected Works*, transl. of the 4th suppl. Russ. edn., prepared by IML, CC of the CPSU, 4th Eng. edn., Moscow 1960–1970.

ME *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* (1909), CW 14, 17–361.

Ph *Philosophical Notebooks*, CW 38.

Tactics *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution* (1905), CW 9, 15–140.

Werke *Werke*, ed. IML at the CC of the CPSU, Ger. edn. prepared by IML at the CC of the SED, 40 vols. and 2 suppl. vols., Berlin/GDR 1953 et sqq. (Ger. new edn. since 1990 ed. Institut für Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung).

Rosa Luxemburg

Accu *Die Akkumulation des Kapitals: Ein Beitrag zur ökonomischen Erklärung des Imperialismus* (1913), GW 5, 5–411; Eng. *The Accumulation of Capital: A Contribution to the Economic Theory of Imperialism*, transl. N. Gray, CW 2; *The Accumulation of Capital*.

Crisis *Die Krise der Sozialdemokratie* (1916), GW 4, 49–164; Eng. *The Crisis in German Social-Democracy*, transl. Socialist Publication Society, New York 1919, repr. in *RLR*, 312–78.

CW *The Complete Works of Rosa Luxemburg*, ed. P. Hudis and P. Le Blanc, London-New York 2013 et sqq. (14 vols. forthcoming).

GW *Gesammelte Werke*, vols. 1–5 ed. IML, CC of the SED, first edn., Berlin/GDR 1970–75, since 1990 ed. Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung, Berlin, vol. 6, ed. A. Laschitza and E. Müller, Berlin 2014.

Mass *Massenstreik, Partei und Gewerkschaften* (1906), GW 2, 91–170; Eng. *The Mass Strike, the Political Party, and the Trade Unions*, transl. P. Lavan, Detroit 1925, repr. in *RLR*, 168–99.

RLR *The Rosa Luxemburg Reader*, ed. P. Hudis and K. Anderson, New York 2004.

Antonio Gramsci

AGR *The Antonio Gramsci Reader*, ed. D. Forgacs, New York 2000.

FS *Further Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, ed. and transl. D. Boothman, Minneapolis 1995.

Gef *Gefängnishefte*, Ger. critical complete edn. based on the It. edn. by V. Gerratana comm. by the Gramsci Institute (1975), ed. Ger. Gramsci Project under the scientific guidance of K. Bochmann and W.F. Haug, and P. Jehle since vol. 7, 10 vols., Berlin-Hamburg 1991–2002.

ON *Ordine nuovo* (1919/20), Turin 1954.

O *Opere di Antonio Gramsci*, Turin 1947 et sqq.

PN *Prison Notebooks*, ed. and transl. J.A. Buttigieg, 3 vols., New York 1992, 1996, 2007.

Q *Quaderni del carcere*, It. critical edn of the Gramsci-Institute, ed. V. Gerratana, 4 vols., Turin 1975.

SPN *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, ed. and transl. Q. Hoare and G. Nowell-Smith, New York 1971.

4 *Further Editions and Titles of Works*

T.W. Adorno

AesT *Ästhetische Theorie* (1970 pub. by G. Adorno and R. Tiedemann); Eng. *Aesthetic Theory*, ed. and transl. R. Hullot-Kentor, Minneapolis 1997 [GS 7].

DE *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, see Horkheimer.

GS *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. R. Tiedemann, 20 vols., Frankfurt/M 1973–86.

IntroSoc *Introduction to Sociology* (1968), ed. C. Gödde, transl. E. Jephcott, Stanford (CA) 2000 [NgS IV.15].

NegDia *Negative Dialektik* (1966); Eng. *Negative Dialectics*, transl. E.B. Ashton, New York 1973 [GS 6].

NgS *Nachgelassene Schriften*, ed. Theodor W. Adorno Archiv, Frankfurt/M 1993 et sqq.

Prisms *Prismen: Kulturkritik und Gesellschaft* (1955); Eng. *Prisms*, transl. S. Weber and S. Weber, London 1967, Cambridge (MA) 1981 [GS 10.1].

L. Althusser

DKL	L. Althusser, É. Balibar, *Das Kapital lesen*, 1st Ger. partial edn., 2 vols., Reinbek 1972; Fr. L. Althusser, É. Balibar, R. Establet, P. Macherey, and J. Rancière, *Lire le Capital*, Paris 1965, rev. new edn., Paris 1996; Eng. *Reading Capital: The Complete Edition*, transl. B. Brewster and D. Fernbach, London 2015.
EssSelfCrit	*Élements d'autocritique*, Paris 1974; Eng. *Essays in Self-Criticism*, transl. G. Lock, London 1976.
FM	*Pour Marx*, Paris 1965, new edn. with a preface by É. Balibar, Paris 1996; Eng. *For Marx*, transl. B. Brewster, London 2005.

Aristotle

EN	*Ethica Nicomachea*
Metaph	*Metaphysica*
Politics	*Politica*

W. Benjamin

Arcades	*Das Passagen-Werk* [GS 5]; Eng. *The Arcades Project*, transl. H. Eiland and K. McLaughlin, Cambridge (MA)-London 1999.
GS	*Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. R. Tiedemann and H. Schweppenhäuser, 7 vols., Frankfurt/M 1972–89.
OWStreet	*One-Way Street and Other Writings*, transl. by E. Jephcott and K. Shorter, London 1979.
SelWr	*Selected Writings*, ed. H. Eiland and M.W. Jennings, 4 vols., Cambridge (MA)-London 1991–99.

E. Bernstein

Preconditions	*Die Voraussetzungen des Sozialismus und die Aufgaben der Sozialdemokratie* (1899); Eng. *The Preconditions of Socialism*, ed. and transl. H. Tudor, Cambridge 1993.

E. Bloch

GA	*Gesamtausgabe*, 16 vols., Frankfurt/M 1969–76, suppl. vol. 1978.
HOT	*Erbschaft dieser Zeit* (1935); Eng. *Heritage of Our Times*, transl. N. Plaice and S. Plaice, Berkeley 1962 [GA 4].
PH	*Das Prinzip Hoffnung* (written 1938–47, rev. 1953 and 1959); Eng. *The Principle of Hope*, 3 vols., transl. N. Plaice, S. Plaice, and P. Knight, Cambridge (MA) 1986 [GA 5].
SU	*Geist der Utopie* (Zweite Fassung, 1923); Eng. *The Spirit of Utopia*, transl. A.A. Nassar, Stanford (CA) 2000 [GA 3].

V. Braun

Texte *Texte in zeitlicher Folge*, 10 vols., Halle/Saale-Leipzig 1989–93.

B. Brecht

CP *Collected Plays*, ed. J. Willett and R. Manheim, 8 vols., London 1994–2004.

GA *Werke*: Große kommentierte Berliner und Frankfurter Ausgabe, 30 vols. with index vol., 1988–2000.

GW *Gesammelte Werke*, 20 vols., Frankfurt/M 1977.

R. Descartes

Medit. *Meditationes de Prima Philosophia, in qua Dei existentia et animae immortalitas demonstratur* (1641); Eng. *Meditations on First Philosophy, in which the existence of God and the immortality of the soul are demonstrated*, The Philosophical Writings of Descartes, 3 vols., transl. J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff, and D. Murdoch, Cambridge 1988.

L. Feuerbach

FB *The Fiery Brook: Selected Writings of Ludwig Feuerbach*, transl. and introd. Z. Hanfi, Garden City (NY) 1972.

GW *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. W. Schuffenhauer, vols. 1–18, Berlin/GDR 1967 et sqq., vol. 19, Berlin 1993.

S. Freud

SE *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, transl. from the German under the General Editorship of J. Strachey, in collaboration with A. Freud, with the assistance of A. Strachey and A. Tyson, 24 vols., London 1953–74.

S. Hall

CritDlgs *Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, ed. D. Morley and K.-H. Chen, London-New York 1996.

G.W.F. Hegel

Enc – Enc I, Enc II, Enc III *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse* (1817, ^{3}1830); Eng. *The Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences in Basic Outline: Part 1: Logic*, ed. and transl. K. Brinkmann and D.O. Dahlstrom, Cambridge 2010 [Enc I]; *Hegel's Philosophy of Nature*, transl. A.V. Miller, Oxford 1970 [Enc II]; *Hegel's Philosophy of Mind*, transl. W. Wallace and A.V. Miller, revised by M. Inwood, Oxford 2007 [Enc III].

SciLogic *Wissenschaft der Logik* (1812–16); Eng. *The Science of Logic*, transl. G. di Giovanni, New York 2010.

Phen *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (1807, ²1831); Eng. *Phenomenology of Spirit*, transl. M. Inwood, Oxford 2018.

PhilHist – PH, LPWH 1822–3, LPWH Intro *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte* (1837, ²1840); Eng. *The Philosophy of History*, transl. J. Sibree, New York 1956 [PH]; *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History: Volume 1: Manuscripts of the Introduction and the Lectures of 1822–3*, ed. and transl. R.F. Brown and P.C. Hodgson, with the assistance of W.G. Geuss, Oxford 2011 [LPWH 1822–3]; *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History: Introduction: Reason in History*, transl. H.B. Nisbet with an introduction by D. Forbes, Cambridge 1975 [LPWH Intro].

PhRight *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1821, ²1833); Eng. *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, ed. A.W. Wood, transl. H.B. Nisbet, Cambridge 1991.

PolWr *Political Writings*, ed. L. Dickey and H.B. Nisbet, transl. H.B. Nisbet, Cambridge 1999.

W *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, based on the *Werke* 1832–45, re-ed. E. Moldenhauer and K.M. Michel, Frankfurt/M 1971.

K. Holzkamp

SE *Sinnliche Erkenntnis: Historischer Ursprung und gesellschaftliche Funktion der Wahrnehmung*, Frankfurt/M 1973.

M. Horkheimer

DE M. Horkheimer and Th.W. Adorno, *Dialektik der Aufklärung: Philosophische Fragmente* (1947, already 1944 as mimeography titled *Philosophische Fragmente*); Eng. *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, ed. G. Schmid Noerr, transl. E. Jephcott, Stanford (CA) 2002.

I. Kant

Anthrop *Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht* (1798 = A, ²1800 = B); Eng. *Anthropology From a Pragmatic Point of View*, transl. R.B. Louden, in *Anthropology, History, and Education*, ed. G. Zöller and R. Louden, Cambridge 2007, 227–429.

WA *Werkausgabe*, ed. W. Weischedel, 12 vols., Frankfurt/M 1968.

A. Labriola

EssMCH *Essays on the Materialist Conception of History*, transl. C.H. Kerr, Chicago 1903, repr. New York 1966.

HM-P *Del materialismo storico: Dilucidazione preliminare* (1896); Eng. *Historical Materialism*, in *EssMCH*, 95–246.

SocPh *Discorrendo di Socialismo e filosofia* (1898–99); Eng. *Socialism and Philosophy*, transl. E. Untermann from the 3rd It. edn., first pub. Chicago 1906.

G. Lukács

HCC *Geschichte und Klassenbewußtsein* (Berlin 1923), enl. edn. 1967 [W 2]; Eng. *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, transl. R. Livingstone, London 1971.

Ontology *Zur Ontologie des gesellschaftlichen Seins*, 2 half-vols., posthumously ed. F. Benseler, W 13 and 14, 1984 and 1986; Eng. *The Ontology of Social Being*, transl. D. Fernbach, 3 vols., London 1978.

W *Werke*, ed. F. Benseler et al., vols. 2–17, Neuwied-Berlin/W 1962 et sqq., vols. 18, 1.1, 1.2, 3.1, Bielefeld 2005, 2016, 2018, 2021.

Mao Zedong

SelWks *Selected Works*, 5 vols., Peking 1965 et sqq.

H. Marcuse

ErosCiv *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud* (1955), Boston 1974.

ODMan *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society*, Boston 1964.

J.C. Mariátegui

Seven Essays *Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana* (1928); Eng. *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality*, transl. M. Urquidi, Austin 1971; Ger. *Sieben Versuche, die peruanische Wirklichkeit zu verstehen*, with a preface by K. Füssel and a postscript by W.F. Haug, transl. K. Füssel, B. Kinter, and U. Varchmin, Berlin/W-Freiburg/Switzerland 1986.

F. Mehring

GS *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Th. Höhle et al., 15 vols., Berlin/GDR 1960–66, Berlin/GDR ^{2}1971.

D. Ricardo

Wks *The Works and Correspondence of David Ricardo*, ed. P. Sraffa with the collaboration of M. Dobb, 11 vols., Cambridge 1951 et sqq.

A. Smith

GE *The Glasgow Edition of the Works and Correspondence of Adam Smith*, 8 vols., Oxford 1976 et sqq.

Wealth *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (London 1776; 3rd enlarged edn., London 1784; 5th definitive edn., London 1789) [GE 2].

J. Stalin

DHMat 'Dialectical and Historical Materialism' (first pub. in *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (*Bolsheviks*)*: Short Course*, ed. by a committee of the CC of the CPSU(B), New York 1939).

Wks *Works*, 13 vols., ed. Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute of the CP, CPSU (B), Moscow 1954, vol. 14 ed. Red Star Press, London 1978.

M. Weber

EaS *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft: Grundriss der verstehenden Soziologie* (1921), ed. J. Winckelmann, 5th, rev. edn., Tübingen 1972; Eng. *Economy and Society*, 2 vols., ed. G. Roth and C. Wittich, Berkeley 1978.

FMW *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. and transl. H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, Oxford 1946.

Notes on Contributors

Editors

Wolfgang Fritz Haug
b. 1936; Dr. phil. habil., Dr. h. c., Professor of Philosophy (retired) at Freie Universität Berlin; Academic Director of the Berlin Institute of Critical Theory; founder and editor of the journal *Das Argument*. Selected publications: *VorSchule zur Philosophie der Praxis* (Hamburg 2021); *Hightech-Kapitalismus in der großen Krise* (Hamburg 2012); *Philosophieren mit Brecht und Gramsci* (Hamburg 2005); *Pluraler Marxismus, 2 vols.* (Hamburg 1985/87); *Critique of Commodity Aesthetics* (Cambridge 1986); *Der hilflose Antifaschismus: Zur Kritik der Vorlesungsreihen über Wissenschaft und Nationalsozialismus an deutschen Universitäten* (Frankfurt/M 1967).

Frigga Haug
b. 1937; Dr. phil. habil., Dr. h. c., Professor of Sociology (retired) at Hamburg University; honorary chairwoman of the Berlin Institute of Critical Theory; editor of the journal *Das Argument*. Selected publications: *Die Unruhe des Lernens* (Hamburg 2020); *Der im Gehen erkundete Weg – Marxismus-Feminismus* (Hamburg 2015); *Zwischen Klassenstaat und Selbstbefreiung: Zum Staatsverständnis von Rosa Luxemburg* (co-editor, Baden-Baden 2011); *Female Sexualization: A Collective Work of Memory* (London 1987); *Beyond Female Masochism: Memory-work and Politics* (London-New York 1980).

Peter Jehle
b. 1954; Dr. phil. habil., Associate Professor of Romance Studies at Potsdam University; Chairman of the Berlin Institute of Critical Theory; co-editor of the journal *Das Argument*. Selected publications: *Antonio Gramsci zur Einführung* (co-author, Hamburg 2014); *Zivile Helden: Theaterverhältnisse und kulturelle Hegemonie in der französischen und spanischen Aufklärung* (Hamburg 2010); *Werner Krauss: Briefe 1922 bis 1976* (editor, Frankfurt/M 2002); *Gramsci, Gefängnishefte, vols. 7–10* (co-editor, Hamburg 1996–2002); *Werner Krauss und die Romanistik im NS-Staat* (Hamburg 1996).

Wolfgang Küttler
b. 1936, died in 2024; Dr. phil., Dr. sc. phil. habil., had been Head of the 'Theory and Methodology of Historical Science' department at the Central Institute for History (Academy of Sciences, GDR); fellow at the Berlin Institute

of Critical Theory; founding member and member of the scientific advisory board at Leibniz-Sozietät der Wissenschaften zu Berlin. Selected publications: *Geschichtsphilosophie und Geschichtswissenschaft* (Berlin 2008); *Der Formationsgedanke im Spätwerk von Karl Marx und die Perspektiven gesellschaftlichen Wandels* (Berlin 2000); *Historiographiegeschichte als Methodologiegeschichte* (co-editor, Berlin 1991); '*... dass Vernunft in der Geschichte sei*' – *Formationsgeschichte und revolutionärer Aufbruch der Menschheit* (co-author, Berlin 1989); *Lenins Formationsanalyse der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft in Russland vor 1905: Ein Beitrag zur Theorie und Methode historischer Untersuchungen von Gesellschaftsformationen* (Berlin 1978).

Oliver Walkenhorst
b. 1973; diploma in physics; 2002–13 scientist at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research; 2008–21 editorial board member of *Das Argument*; editorial board member (since 2007), coordinator (since 2013) and co-editor (since 2023) of the HKWM. Selected publication: 'Lamarckismus' (co-authored with Reinhard Mocek and Volker Schurig), in: HKWM 8/I (2012).

Contributors

Wolfram Adolphi
b. 1951; Dr. sc. 1989 at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (GDR). Selected publications: *Wie Mao in deutsche Köpfe kam* (Berlin 2025); *Hartenstein oder Die unerhörte Arbeit des Erinnerns* (Gransee 2024); *Mao: Eine Chronik* (Berlin 2009).

Jan Otto Andersson
b. 1943; prof. in International Economics (retired) at the Institute for Statistics and Economic Research at Åbo Akademi University, Turku (Finland). Selected publications: *Elements of Ecological Economics* (co-author, London 2010); 'International Trade in a Full and Unequal World', in: *International Trade and Environmental Justice* (New York 2010); 'Universalism in the Age of Workfare: Attitudes to Basic Income in Sweden and Finland', in: *Normative Foundations of the Welfare State* (co-author, London-New York 2005); 'Ecologically unsustainable trade', in: *Ecological Economics*, vol. 37:1 (2001); *Nordic Studies on Intra-Industry Trade* (Åbo 1987); *Studies in the Theory of Unequal Exchange between Nations* (Åbo 1976).

Helmut Arnold
b. 1950; Dr. sc. agr.; retired at Ministry of agriculture and environmental protection in Hesse. Selected publications: 'Bodenschutz – gesunde Nutzung nur mit

verbesserter Vorsorge und energischer Sanierung' in: 2012 Duisburg, Prävention No. 2; *„Dann fangen wir von vorne an" – Theodor Bergmann zum 90. Geburtstag* (co-editor, Hamburg 2007); 'Was kann Ökologie leisten?' in: *BdWi-Forum Marburg* (1981, No. 47); *Ökologische Herausforderungen der Agrarpolitik* (Freiburg 1981).

Konstantin Baehrens

b. 1984; editorial coordinator in the HKWM International project, fellow in the Ludwig Rosenberg Kolleg 'Historical Relations of Judaism and the Labour Movement' at the Moses Mendelssohn Centre, an affiliated institute of Potsdam university. Selected publications: *Material und Begriff: Arbeitsverfahren und theoretische Beziehungen Walter Benjamins* (co-editor, Hamburg 2019); *Nachkriegsliteratur als öffentliche Erinnerung: Deutsche Vergangenheit im europäischen Kontext* (co-editor, Berlin-Boston 2018).

Colin Barker

b. 1939, died in 2019; was a Senior Lecturer in Sociology at Manchester Metropolitan University. Selected publications: *Marxism and Social Movements* (co-editor, Leiden 2013); *Revolutionary Rehearsals* (editor, Chicago 2008); *The Power Game* (London 1972).

Theodor Bergmann

b. 1916, died in 2017; Dr. sc. agr., was Prof. for International Comparisons in Agrarian Policy at University of Stuttgart-Hohenheim; had been the publisher of the periodical *Arbeiterpolitik*. Selected publications: *Sozialisten Zionisten Kommunisten: Die Familie Bergmann-Rosenzweig* (Hamburg 2014); *Internationalismus im 21. Jahrhundert: Lernen aus Niederlagen – für eine neue internationale Solidarität* (Hamburg 2009); *Gegen den Strom: Die Geschichte der KPD* (*Opposition*) (Hamburg 2001); *Agrarpolitik und Agrarwirtschaft sozialistischer Länder* (Stuttgart 1973); *Funktionen und Wirkungsgrenzen von Produktionsgenossenschaften in Entwicklungsländern* (Frankfurt/M 1968); *50 Jahre Gewerkschaftsarbeit auf dem Lande: Eine Chronik der Gewerkschaft Gartenbau, Land- und Forstwirtschaft und ihre Vorläufer* (Hannoversch Münden 1959).

Stefan Bollinger

b. 1954; Dr. sc. phil. habil.; historian and political scientist at Free University Berlin and Rosa Luxemburg Foundation. Selected publications: *1939 – wie der Krieg gemacht wurde: ... und Deutschland die Welt in den Abgrund stürzen durfte* (Cologne 2022); *Die DDR in der gesamtdeutschen Geschichte: vertane Chance – Sackgasse – Nachwirkungen* (editor, Buskow 2022); *November '18: Als*

die Revolution nach Deutschland kam (Berlin 2018); *Lenin: Theoretiker, Stratege, marxistischer Realpolitiker* (Cologne 2017); *Imperialismustheorien: Historische Grundlagen für eine aktuelle Kritik* (editor, Vienna 2004); *Zur sozialen Revolution der Arbeiterklasse* (Berlin 1984).

Ulrich Brand

b. 1967; Dr. phil. habil; prof. of international politics at the University of Vienna. Selected publications: *Capitalism at the Limit: A Political Ecology of a World in Crisis* (Cambridge 2025, with Markus Wissen); *The Imperial Mode of Living: Everyday Life and the Ecological Crisis of Capitalism* (London 2021, with Markus Wissen; translated into eleven languages); *Conflicts in Global Environmental Regulation and the Internationalization of the State: Contested Terrains* (London 2008, with Christoph Görg, Joachim Hirsch, and Markus Wissen).

Mario Candeias

b. 1969; Dr. rer. pol.; consultant for socialist transformation research, left-wing strategies and parties; was the director of the Institute for Critical Social Analysis, Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, Berlin; editor of the journal *LuXemburg*. Selected publications: *KlassenTheorie: Vom Making und Remaking* (editor, Hamburg 2021); *Demobilisierte Klassengesellschaft und Potenziale verbindender Klassenpolitik* (co-author, Berlin 2019); *Rechtspopulismus in Europa: linke Gegenstrategien* (editor, Berlin 2015); *Neoliberalismus – Hochtechnologie – Hegemonie: Grundrisse einer transnationalen kapitalistischen Produktions- und Lebensweise* (Hamburg 2009^2); *Krise: Neues vom Finanzkapitalismus und seinem Staat* (co-editor, Berlin 2009).

Paresh Chattopadhyay

b. 1927, died in 2023; state doctorate in Economic Sciences; was emeritus professor of political economy in the department of sociology at the University of Quebec, Montreal. Selected publications: *Socialism in Marx's* Capital*: Towards a dealienated world* (Cham 2021); *Socialism and Commodity Production: Essay in Marx revival* (Leiden 2018); *Marx's Associated Mode of Production: A critique of Marxism* (New York 2016); *The Marxian Concept of Capital and the Soviet Experience: Essay in the Critique of Political Economy* (Westport-London 1994).

Dagmar Engelken

b. 1978.

Sibylle Fischer

b. 1962; PhD; Associate Professor of Spanish and Portuguese, History and Comparative Literature at New York University; was Visiting Fellow at the Center for the Study of Social Difference at Columbia University. Selected publication: *Modernity Disavowed: Haiti and the Cultures of Slavery in the Age of Revolution* (Durham-London 2004).

Georg Fülberth

b. 1939; Dr. phil.; Professor for Political Science (retired) at Marburg University. Selected publications: *Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (4th edn., Cologne 2022); *G Strich – Kleine Geschichte des Kapitalismus* (7th edn., Cologne 2021); *Friedrich Engels* (Cologne 2018); *Marxismus* (Cologne 2014); *Sieben Anstrengungen, den vorläufigen Endsieg des Kapitalismus zu begreifen* (Hamburg 1991); *Proletarische Partei und bürgerliche Literatur* (Neuwied-Berlin 1972).

Montserrat Galcerán

b. 1946; Dr.; Professor Em. of Philosophy at Complutense University of Madrid. Selected publications: *Activistas en Cibeles: Apuntes para futuros municipalistas* (Madrid 2022); *La bárbara Europa: una mirada desde el postcolonialismo y la descolonialidad* (Madrid 2016); *Deseo* (*y*) *Libertad: Una inverstigación sobre los presupuestos de la acción colectiva* (Madrid 2009); *Silencio y olvido: El pensar de Heidegger durante los años 30* (Hondarribia 2004); *La invención del marxismo* (Madrid 1997); *Innovación tecnológica y sociedad de masas* (co-author, Madrid 1997).

Stephen Gill

b. 1950; PhD; Distinguished Research Professor of Political Science at York University. Selected publications: *New Constitutionalism and World Order* (co-author, Cambridge 2014); *Global Crises and the Crisis of Global Leadership* (Cambridge 2011); *Power and Resistance in the New World Order* (2nd edn., London-New York 2008); *Power, Production and Social Reproduction: Human In/security in the Global Political Economy* (co-author, London-New York 2003); *Gramsci, Historical Materialism and International Relations* (Cambridge 1993).

Werner Goldschmidt

b. 1940, died in 2019; Dr.; was professor of sociology at Hamburg university. Selected publications: *Kapital – Macht – Staat: Stichworte zur marxistischen politischen Theorie* (Hamburg 2020); *Freiheit, Gleichheit, Solidarität: Beiträge zur Dialektik der Demokratie* (co-editor, Bern 2008); *Die Welt zwischen Recht und Gewalt: Internationale Sozialordnung, Gewalt, Völkerrecht und Demokratie* (co-

editor, Hamburg 2003); *Staatstheorien – klassische Theorien über den bürgerlichen Staat* (editor, Hamburg 1995); *Vernunft und Politik: Studien zur Dialektik* (co-editor, Cologne 1990); *Staat und Monopole* (editor, Hamburg 1979).

Christoph Görg

b. 1958; Dr. phil, habil.; chair of Social Ecology (retired) at the Institute of Social Ecology, University of Natural resources and Life sciences Vienna (BOKU). Selected publications: *Zur Aktualität der Staatsform: Die Materialistische Staatstheorie von Joachim Hirsch* (co-editor, Baden-Baden 2018); *Conflicts in Environmental Regulation and the Internationalization of the State: Contested Terrains* (co-author, London-New York 2008); *Regulation der Naturverhältnisse: Zu einer kritischen Theorie der ökologischen Krise* (Münster 2003).

Volker Gransow

b. 1945, died in 2015; Dr. habil.; taught Sociology at Free University Berlin, Berkley, Stanford, and in Toronto a. o. Selected publications: *Uniting Germany* (co-editor, New York 2006); 'Agnes Heller', in: *The Biographical Dictionary of Neo-Marxism* (Westport 1985); *Konzeptionelle Wandlungen der Kommunismusforschung* (Frankfurt/M 1980).

Gerhard Hanappi

b. 1951; Master economics & informatics, Dr. social sciences. habil.; prof. of economics & informatics (retired) at Technische Universität Vienna. Selected publications: 'Predictions and Hopes: Global Political Economy Dynamics of the Next Ten Years', in: *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal*, vol. 11/8 (2024); 'Perplexing Complexity: Human Modelling and Primacy of the Group as Essence of Complexity', in: *Review of Evolutionary Political Economy* (2020; download); 'Capital after Capitalism: The evolution of the concept of capital in the light of long-run sustainable reproduction of the species', in: *World Review of Political Economy*, vol. 9/1 (2018); *Money, Credit, Capital, and the State: On the evolution of money and institutions* (Berlin 2013); *Evolutionary Economics: The Evolutionary Revolution in the Social Sciences* (Aldershot 1994); *The Stages of Industrial Capitalism* (Berlin 1989).

Donna J. Haraway

b. 1944. PhD Yale University in Biology; Distinguished Professor Emerita, History of Consciousness Department, University of California at Santa Cruz, USA. Selected publications: *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Durham 2016); *Manifestly Haraway* (Minneapolis 2016); *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis 2008); *The Companion Species Manifesto* (Chicago 2003);

The Haraway Reader (New York 2004); *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium* (New York 1997, 2nd edn. 2018); *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women* (New York 1991); *Primate Visions* (New York 1989); *Crystals, Fabrics, and Fields* (New Haven 1976, 2004); *Making Kin Not Population* (co-editor, Chicago 2018).

Ursula Huws

b. 1947; Professor of Labour and Globalisation at the University of Hertfordshire and editor of the journal *Work Organisation, Labour and Globalisation*. Selected publications: *Reinventing the Welfare State: Digital Platforms and Public Policies* (London 2020); *Labor in the Global Digital Economy: The Cybertariat Comes of Age* (New York 2014); *The Making of a Cybertariat: Virtual Work in a Real World* (New York 2003); *Your Job in the 80s* (London 1982).

Susan Kippax

b. 1941; BA (Hons.), PhD University of Sydney, Australia. Selected publication: 'Infectious disease and globalization' (co-author), in: *The Routledge International Handbook of Globalization Studies* (2nd edn. New York 2016).

Hans Gustav Klaus

b. 1944, died in 2020; Dr.; was Prof. at the Chair of Literature of the British Isles at Rostock University. Selected publications: *Voices of Anger and Hope: Studies in the Literature of Labour and Socialism* (Brighton 2019); *The Literature of Labour: Two Hundred Years of Working-Class Writing* (second edn. with new introduction Brighton 2018); *Ecology and the Literature of the British Left: The Red and the Green* (co-editor, Farnham a. o. 2012); *Marxistische Literaturkritik in England: Das 'Thirties Movement'* (Neuwied-Darmstadt 1973).

Juha Koivisto

b. 1958; Dr., Docent at the University of Helsinki (Finland). Selected publications: 'Naturgeschichte', in: HKWM 9/II (2023); *Historical-Critical Dictionary of Marxism: A Selection* (co-editor, Leiden-Boston 2023); 'Kulturstudien (Cultural Studies)', in: HKWM 8/I (2012); 'Kontingenz', in: HKWM 7/II (2010); 'Ideological Powers and Resistance: The Contribution of W.F. Haug and Projekt Ideologie-Theorie', in: *Rethinking Marxism* 9.4 (1997); 'Umkämpfte Philosophie', in: *Das Argument* 192 (1992); an editor of Stuart Hall's *Ausgewählte Schriften* (5 Volumes).

Michael Krätke

b. 1950; Dr.; was professor for sociology, chair of political economy and director of the Institute for Advanced Studies at Lancaster University; has been an editor

of the journal *spw – Zeitschrift für sozialistische Politik und Wirtschaft*. Selected publications: *Friedrich Engels oder: Wie ein Cotton-Lord den Marxismus erfand* (Berlin 2020); *Kritik der politischen Ökonomie heute: Zeitgenosse Marx* (Hamburg 2017); *Demokratie und globale Wirtschaftskrise* (Zurich 2008); *Neun Fragen zum Kapitalismus* (co-author, Berlin 2007); *Kritik der Staatsfinanzen* (Hamburg 1984); *Krise und Kapitalismus bei Marx* (co-author, Frankfurt/M 1975).

Mikko Lahtinen

b. 1966; Associate professor in political science, Tampere University (Finland).

Sven-Eric Liedman

b. 1939; PhD; Professor Emeritus of History of Ideas and Sciences at the University of Gothenburg. Selected publications: *Tidens smala näs: Tankar i en vilsegången tid* (Stockholm 2024); *The Game of Contradictions: The Philosophy of Friedrich Engels and Nineteenth Century Science* (Leiden-Boston 2023); *Från Platon till demokratins kris: de politiska idéernas historia* (15th edn., Stockholm 2020); *A World to Win: The Life and Works of Karl Marx* (London-New York 2018); *A Universe of Symbols: Ernst Cassirer in Göteborg and in the World* (Gothenburg 2008).

Andrea Maihofer

b. 1953; Dr. phil. habil.; Professor em. for Gender Research and Director of the Gender Studies Centre at Basel University. Selected publications: 'Wandel und Persistenz hegemonialer Männlichkeit und die Grenzen des Konzepts von Caring Masculinities' in: *Caring Masculinities? Männlichkeiten in der Transformation kapitalistischer Wachstumsgesellschaften* (Munich 2019); *Emanzipation: Zur Geschichte und Aktualität eines politischen Begriffs* (co-editor, Münster 2019); *reproduktion/reproduction: figurationen, gender literatur kultur* (co-editor, Cologne 2003); *Geschlecht als Existenzweise: Macht, Moral, Recht und Geschlechterdifferenz* (Frankfurt/M 1995); *Das Recht bei Marx: Zur dialektischen Struktur von Gerechtigkeit, Menschenrechten und Recht* (Baden-Baden 1992).

Thomas Marxhausen

b. 1947, died in 2010; Dr.; was Prof. for Political Economy at the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg and collaborator on the Marx-Engels-Gesamtausgabe (MEGA). Selected publications: *DDR 1989/90 – Revolution oder Konterrevolution?* (Berlin 2009); 'Zum Zusammenhang von Fetischismus, Entfremdung und Ideologie bei Marx.', in: *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie* 35/12 (1987); *Marx' Untersuchung der „Auflösung der Ricardoschen Schule"* (Halle 1982); *Die Entstehung und Entwicklung der Theorie von der Versachlichung gesellschaft-*

licher Verhältnisse und der Personifizierung von Sachen bei Karl Marx von 1843–1863 (Halle-Wittenberg 1974).

Claudia Opitz
b. 1955; Dr. phil. habil.; Professor em. for Modern History at Basel University. Selected publications: *Böse Weiber: Wissen und Geschlecht in der frühneuzeitlichen Dämonologie* (Sulzbach/Ts. 2017); *Geschlechtergeschichte* (Frankfurt/M 2010); *Geschichte der Mädchen- und Frauenbildung* (co-editor, Frankfurt/M 1996); *Frauenalltag im Mittelalter: Biographien des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts* (2nd edn., Weinheim-Basel 1987).

Helmut Peitsch
b. 1948; Dr. phil. habil.; Prof. of German Literature (18th–21st cent.) at Potsdam University (retired), Senior Research Fellow at Selma Stern Centre for Jewish Studies Berlin-Brandenburg. Selected publications: *Reisen nach Auschwitz und Anthologien letzter Briefe, 1945–1975: Eine literarische Beziehungsgeschichte von Antifaschismus in BRD und DDR* (Berlin 2021); *Roy Pascal and Georg Lukács: Towards a re-evaluation of the history of Marxist literary criticism in Britain?* (London 2018); *Nachkriegsliteratur 1945–1989* (Göttingen 2009); *European Memories of the Second World War* (co-editor, New York-Oxford 2006); *„No Politics"?: Die Geschichte des deutschen PEN-Zentrums in London 1933–2002* (Göttingen 2006); *Georg Forster: A history of his critical reception* (New York 2001); *Georg Forsters „Ansichten vom Niederrhein": Zum Problem des Übergangs vom bürgerlichen Humanismus zum revolutionären Demokratismus* (Frankfurt/M 1978).

Victor Rego Diaz
b. 1965; Social Economist. Selected publications: *Stuart Hall: Vertrauter Fremder. Leben zwischen zwei Inseln* (Hamburg 2020 / Editorial Board); *Mit Gramsci arbeiten: Texte zur politisch-praktischen Aneignung Antonio Gramscis* (Hamburg 2008 / Editorial Board); *Bob Jessop: Kapitalismus, Regulation, Staat. Ausgewählte Schriften* (Hamburg 2007 / Editorial Board).

Antje Schmitt
b. 1973; Social Economist, studied at Hamburg University of Economics and Politics (HWP).

Victor Strazzeri
b. 1985; Dr. phil., is a postdoctoral fellow at the Institute of Contemporary History in Ljubljana, Slovenia. His research spans social and political theory (espe-

cially Marx, Weber and Lukács) and has focused, more recently, on the relationship between the communist and feminist movements in the post-1968 context. He was a postdoctoral fellow in Social Sciences at the Federal University of São Paulo (2023–2025) and in History at the University of Geneva (2020–21) and at the University of Bern (2017–2020). He coordinated the project "Internationalization of the *Historical-Critical Dictionary of Marxism*" (2019–2024) with the Berlin Institute for Critical Theory. Selected publication: *The Young Max Weber and German Social Democracy: The 'Labour Question' and the Genesis of Social Theory in Imperial Germany (1884–1899)* (Leiden 2022).

Benno Teschke

b. 1967; PhD; Professor of international relations at the University of Sussex. Selected publication: *The Myth of 1648: Class, Geopolitics, and the Making of Modern International Relations* (London-New York 2003).

Bastiaan Wielenga

b. 1936, died in 2015; Dr.; was Prof. of Biblical Studies at the Tamilnadu Theological Seminary in Madurai (India), co-founder of the Centre for Social Analysis. Selected publications: *Towards an Eco-Just Society* (Bangalore 1999); *Introduction to Marxism* (Bangalore 1984); *Lenins Weg zur Revolution: Eine Konfrontation mit Sergej Bulgakov und Petr Struve im Interesse einer theologischen Besinnung* (Munich 1971).

Gunter Willing

b. 1953; Dr. sc. phil.; senior researcher (retired), (former) Marx-Engels-Edition at Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg and at Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Selected publications: *Ist Europa noch zu retten?* (editor, Freie Akademie, vol. 39/2020); 'Gasser, Simon Peter (1676–1745)' a. o., in: *The Bloomsbury Dictionary of Eighteenth-Century German Philosophers* (London 2016).

CHAPTER 1

Agrarian Question

A: masʾala zirāʿīya. – F: question agraire. – G: Agrarfrage. – R: agrarnyj vopros. – S: cuestión agraria. – C: nóngyè wèntí 农业问题

1. **Marx** and **Engels** dealt with agriculture extensively in their fundamental works. In 1843, Engels describes three factors which influence agricultural production: the land (whose extent is limited), labour power (whose returns may diminish), and science 'whose progress is […] unlimited', and which supposedly advances in a geometrical progression (MECW 3/440 [MEW 1/521]). **Marx** investigates the productivity phases of agriculture and shows that its development proceeds differently from that of industry: it is initially faster, before slowing down 'in […] capitalist production'. Later, 'when industry reaches a certain level' this disproportion levels out and productivity in agriculture increases more rapidly than in industry. Yet, for this to take place requires the development of the relevant scientific knowledge as well as 'the replacement of the easy-going farmer by the businessman, the farming capitalist; transformation of the husband-man into a pure wage labourer; large-scale agriculture, i.e., with concentrated capitals' (MECW 31/341 [MEW 26.2/103]).

In these passages **Marx** emphasises that he is analysing above all English agriculture, which occupies a special position. At that time, it was only there that development had reached the 'classic form' (*C I*, 876 [MEW 23/744]). The situation was entirely different in France due to its fragmentation of holdings, its lack of machines, and the division of labour. In addition to a detailed treatment of ground rent, he deals with the special conditions of agricultural production. Given that land cannot be multiplied at will, and that the demand for food is constantly increasing, marginal land must be cultivated. The cost of production on these lands determines the market price, so that rent prices differ according to the quality of soil (*Poverty*, MECW 6/202 [MEW 4/171]). But it is above all the original producers who benefit the least from these new developments, since the influx of capital into the agricultural sector leads to the 'martyrology for the producer', and to the 'organized suppression of his individual vitality, freedom and autonomy' (*C I*, 638 [MEW 23/528 et sq.]). The spatial isolation of the rural workers breaks their power of resistance, while inversely, that of the urban workers is increased through their agglomeration. Marx sees the capitalist transformation of the production process as a 'process of destruction': 'Capitalist production, therefore, only develops the techniques and the

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_002
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

degree of combination of the social process of production by simultaneously undermining the original sources of all wealth – the soil and the worker' (ibid. [529 et sq.]).

At the same time, **Marx** analyses the capitalist expropriation of small farmers (in the enclosures in England, but also in the Prussian agrarian reform of 1805–08) as a precondition for the development of industry, because it creates labour power and a home market for capital. He does not speak of rural exodus, rather the 'eviction of a part of the agricultural population' (910 [775]). He sees the decline of the rural working population and its transition to the 'urban or manufacturing proletariat' (796 [671]) as a constant process dependent on the accumulation of capital in agricultural production. He castigates large-scale land ownership and its often inhumane exploitation and eviction of small farmers and tenants, such as the pauperisation and mass emigration of Irish small farmers, or the situation of the crofters (small tenant farmers with one-year oral tenancy agreements in Scotland). But he also notices that the small-scale farm is not disappearing completely elsewhere since farmers, being poor, are prepared to give up part of their wages, rather than because such farming is particularly productive.

It is in this manner that **Marx** and **Engels** analyse all the problems of development in the agricultural sector that were prevalent at the time: the special conditions of agricultural production, land rent, large-scale land ownership, the pauperisation of Irish peasants and Scottish tenant farmers, and how these factors differ from those related to factory work and factory workers (isolation, and difficulty organising, rather than alienation). Ecological problems are also analysed, such as the question of the 'metabolic interaction between man and the earth' and capitalism's ruinous exploitation of the irreplaceable resources of nature and humanity: the natural precondition for regenerative soil fertility is the return of the residues of food and clothing back into the soil. The capitalist mode of production disturbs this metabolism by concentrating the population in cities: 'it destroys at the same time the physical health of the urban worker, and the intellectual life of the rural worker. But by destroying the circumstances surrounding that metabolism, which originated in a merely natural and spontaneous fashion, it compels its systematic restoration as a regulative law of social production, and in a form adequate to the full development of the human race' (637 et sq. [528]).

Concerning the fundamental question of land ownership, **Marx** and **Engels** see a dialectical development from primitive communal property, which determined the structure of old villages but could not harness new scientific knowledge, to private ownership over the land. The latter must later in turn be abolished (in a double dialectical sense): this negation of capitalist production 'does

not re-establish private property, but it does indeed establish individual property on the basis of the achievements of the capitalist era: namely cooperation and the possession in common of the land and the means of production produced by labour itself' (929 [791]).

In *18.B*, **Marx** addresses the special situation of the French small farmers in the 19th cent.: they are sufficiently satisfied thanks to the agrarian reform, isolated, in competition with their class comrades, politically amorphous, and without their own class representation. 'In this way, the great mass of the French nation is formed by simple addition of homologous magnitudes, much as potatoes in a sack form a sack of potatoes' (MECW 11/187 [MEW 8/198] – this comparison has often been cited as evidence for Marx's negative attitude towards peasants, see for example **Mitrany** 1961). In *Peasant War*, **Engels** makes the analysis that the revolutionary demeanour of the German peasants is a result of their class situation at the beginning of the modern era. Exploitation, oppression, and the lack of rights made them radical opponents of the feudal lords.

2. Already in the IWA (First International), and later in shorter works by Wilhelm **Liebknecht**, attempts were made to draft a social-democratic agrarian programme. The most important demands were: the expropriation of the landowners, the handover of large estates to the agricultural workers employed there for use as collective and cooperative farms, the establishment of cooperative associations of small farmers, and freedom of association for agricultural workers.

In the late 1880s and early 1890s, social democracy began to have success in parliamentary elections, but its popularity was limited to the urban industrial centres and the working classes there. In order to broaden the political base of social democracy, especially at a time when (in Denmark) 70–80% of the population was still made up of agricultural workers, but also because of the inequality of voting rights, the parties had to go 'to the country' (MECW 27/484 [MEW 22/486]). This required agitation in the rural setting in addition to an agrarian programme.

Marx and **Engels** intervened in the long-lasting international debate. Nikolai-on (**Danielson**) had asked **Marx** for his assessment of the distinctive structure of Russian *mir* (communal villages), i.e. whether this form was cooperative and therefore constituted the first stage of a socialist agrarian structure, or if it was rather a feudalist relic. After studying various sources at length, Marx assumed the former, provided there were favourable political conditions. His answer remained controversial and was later considered factually wrong by the Russian Marxists. – **Engels** commented on agrarian policy in

1894 (MECW 27/481–502 [MEW 22/483–505]). He considered it feasible for the French and German comrades to have different programmes, and was of the opinion that individual small farms could not be saved in the long run, even through use of protective measures. However, it was desirable to give the small farmers ample time, and then more time on top of that, to convince themselves of the advantages of voluntary cooperative collaboration. Only in this way could they effectively make use of the benefits and advances of mechanisation and the use of chemicals in agriculture. The French Marxists around Jules **Guesde** had taken a much more favourable position towards small farmers than that of their German comrades.

In Germany, the AQ became one of the main issues around which the two major political tendencies crystallised. It had a 'strategic' dimension (the development trends of the agricultural sector) and a tactical one (gaining supporters among the villagers). In 1902 Karl **Kautsky** advocated the Marxist position which assumed there would be a gradual process of concentration in the agricultural sector as well. He considered special protective measures, such as cheap state loans and mortgages, to be of limited effectiveness in view of the legal developments that were taking place. Eduard **David** (1903/1922), on the other hand, tried to prove the superiority of small farms when it comes to nature-dependent production. Their mechanisation should hardly be possible. Especially in livestock production, the small farm would remain unsurpassable. Service cooperatives would enable small farmers to compete with large farms in all aspects of production. David and especially the Bavarian SPD under Georg von **Vollmar** pleaded for reformist policies and a concrete relief package for small farmers. Their North German comrades were more concerned with the struggle against the big landowners, who were over-represented in parliament as a result of the Prussian three-class franchise system and who, as landlords, prevented the masses of agricultural workers from taking part in political and trade union activity. For this reason, the SPD's electoral successes remained severely limited.

In pre-revolutionary Russia, **Lenin** attempted a Marxist analysis in *CapR*, which he later revised on some points (*The Agrarian Programme of Social-Democracy in the First Russian Revolution 1905–1907*, CW 13/217–431). He did not adopt **Marx**'s assessment of the *mir* village communes. Instead, he developed a two-step programme: first, the socialist intelligentsia must organise the most advanced workers for the struggle for political rights; then the peasants, 'an enormous part of the working population of Russia', must be won over as political allies for the further struggle and the revolution. The AQ became the dividing line between the Social Revolutionaries, who had strong support from the peasants, and the Bolsheviks, who needed the support of the peasants in the

struggle of the working class, who were small in number, against feudalism and absolutism. In the 1917 revolution, the Bolsheviks eventually accepted the spontaneous peasant land seizures and land redistribution – originally not intended to be part of their programme – even though these did not eliminate the unjust property structure, but rather sometimes reinforced it.

Among the most important analyses of the rural class structure were two works by **Mao** Zedong (1926, 1927), presumably prepared by **Chen** Boda. These analyses served to formulate an adequate agrarian policy, which made possible an alliance between the great mass of the exploited rural strata and the still-small working class. The victorious revolutions, especially in agrarian societies, would not have been possible without the voluntary and active support of the peasant masses – another argument, among others, which counters David **Mitrany**'s assertion that the communists were hostile towards the peasantry.

3. After the revolution, the AQ takes on a different dimension. How is agrarian reform to be shaped in order to adequately satisfy the appetite for land, and to level out the land ownership structure, but without compromising agricultural production and reducing the share which is to be sold on the market? Which strata are to be won over to socialism, which are to be neutralised, which are to be politically disempowered? How can the millions of small farms be integrated into the socialist planned economy? What and how much can they contribute to the planned initial phase of development?

After the revolution (or after the elimination of capitalism through the Red Army's victory and invasions), all Marxist governments in socialist countries carried out radical agrarian reform, thus largely levelling social inequality and fundamentally changing the economic and political power structures of the village. Forced collectivisation was the next step in the social transformation of the village in the SU. In the years after 1945, this Soviet model was introduced in most countries of the socialist camp, whose expansion was due primarily to the successes of the Red Army rather than through genuine revolutions. From about 1950/51, this policy was abandoned in Yugoslavia, where, after the first successful deviation from orthodoxy in the communist camp, Edvard **Kardelj** established a different socialist agrarian policy and thus introduced an alternative economic and agrarian policy that was no longer oriented around the Soviet model. In 1956, Poland followed this example and paved the way for the dissolution of the few producers' cooperatives. – The PRC formed people's communes in 1956–57 at the height of the Great Leap Forward, and **Mao** claimed to have overtaken the SU on the road to full communism. After 1980, in a reversal of this approach, less integrated forms of cooperation and individual farming were revived.

The contribution of the agricultural sector is essential to the initial phase of development, and this can take various forms. The extent of this contribution has however always been disputed among communist economic policy makers. If the peasants' willingness to suffer and make sacrifices is overburdened, their motivation dwindles; they become alienated from the revolution, turning from supporters into opponents of this forced socialist restructuring. If the percentage contributed is too high, disinvestment occurs in agriculture, its long-term productive capacity suffers, and it becomes the Achilles' heel of the planned economy. Yevgeni **Preobrazhensky** and Nikolai **Bukharin** advocated moderate contributions from the agricultural sector, and modest demands on the agricultural producers, while **Stalin** maximised the contribution in the first Five-Year Plan, which was compressed into four years. (Some Soviet scholars doubt that the agricultural sector in the SU had actually been capable of making such a contribution in 1929 at all; see **Bergmann** 1984.)

The agrarian programmes of the social democratic parties in Western Europe are by no means the same; they differ considerably. The agrarian programme of the Austro-Marxists, adopted at the Vienna party congress in 1925, is oriented to a relatively large extent towards long-term socialist goals with a "pragmatic" agrarian policy. The programme calls for peasant agriculture to be fostered in numerous ways, and freed from over-indebtedness and commercial capital's exploitation. The situation of agricultural workers must be improved. Subsequent tasks in the transition to socialism would be the socialisation of the large forest estates and the large agricultural estates. Once the peasants' appetite for land has been satisfied, the remaining estates should be used for the common good, provided the necessary preconditions are met. The socialist economic system would considerably improve the situation of the working peasants, and as a result the masses would be imbued with cooperative thinking 'and thus create the psychological conditions for the highest development of the farming cooperative system' (**Kluge** 1988, 246 et sq.). – The agrarian programme of Swedish social democracy in 1911 was similar, although large agricultural estates were hardly mentioned: 'estates are to be abandoned'. The practical agrarian policy was on the whole farmer-friendly and oriented towards an alliance with the Farm Workers' Union. – The SPD's agrarian programme, adopted at the 1927 Kiel party congress, unconditionally recognised peasant land ownership. It is this 'positive agrarian policy' of social democracy that Fritz **Baade** in 1956 called agrarian socialism, although this term previously had a different meaning (**Diehl** 1911).

The agrarian debate among scholars affiliated with Marxism has become very wide-ranging and diverse because of the unevenness of development in the world. In late capitalist societies, the role and future of the small farm,

surplus production, proletarianisation, anomie, and right-wing radicalism are in the foreground. In many developing countries, the agrarian movements, the aims and intended reforms of their struggles, and the social relations in their villages have to be analysed, as well as the new methods of internationalised exploitation, the consequences of technical modernisation and increased production expected of the original producers, and high-tech ruinous exploitation. In late capitalist societies, outright agricultural producers make up only a minority of the labour force (less than 10%); their contribution to the GNP is small. A socialist policy in these societies would therefore be able to approach the transformation of the agricultural sector with a lot of patience. In developing countries, however, the AQ is one of the most important issues.

Theodor Bergmann
Translated by Hunter Bolin

Bibliography

F. **Baade**, 'Agrarsozialismus', *Handwörterbuch der Sozialwissenschaften*, vol. 1, Stuttgart-Tübingen 1956, 100–5.

Th. **Bergmann**, 'Die Agrarfrage bei Marx und Engels – und heute', *Kritik der politischen Ökonomie heute: 100 Jahre "Kapital"*, W. Euchner, A. Schmidt (eds.), Frankfurt/M 1968.

Th. **Bergmann**, 'Probleme der Agrarpolitik in sozialistischen Ländern', *Sozialistische Agrarpolitik*, Bergmann/Gey/Quaisser (eds.), Cologne 1984.

L. **Björlin**, 'Jordfrägan i svensk arbetarrörelse 1890–1920', *Arbetarrörelsens arsbok 1974*, Stockholm 1974.

N. **Boukharine** (= Bukharin) et al., *La question paysanne en URSS (1924–1929)*, Paris 1973.

E. **David**, *Sozialismus und Landwirtschaft* (1903), Leipzig 1922.

K. **Diehl**, 'Der ältere Agrarsozialismus und die neuere Bodenreformbewegung in Amerika, England und Deutschland', *Archiv für die Geschichte des Sozialismus und der Arbeiterbewegung*, vol. 1, Leipzig 1911, 225–84.

P. **Gey**, 'Die Stellung des privaten Agrarsektors in der kubanischen Wirtschaft', *Sozialistische Agrarpolitik*, Bergmann/Gey/Quaisser (eds.), Cologne 1984, 232–57.

A. **Hussain** and K. **Tribe**, *Marxism and the Agrarian Question*, London 1983.

K. **Kautsky**, *The Agrarian Question* (1902), London–Winchester 1988.

E. **Kardelj**, *Problems of Socialist Policy in the Countryside* (1960), London 1962.

M. **Kemper**, *Marxismus und Landwirtschaft – eine Darstellung der Entwicklungstendenzen marxistischer Agrartheorie und Agrarpolitik*, Bonn 1929.

U. **Kluge**, *Bauern, Agrarkrise und Volksernährung in der europäischen Zwischenkriegszeit: Studien zur Agrargesellschaft und Wirtschaft der Republik Österreich 1918 bis 1938*, Stuttgart 1988.

H.N. **Lahme**, *Sozialdemokratie und Landarbeiter in Dänemark*, Odense 1982.

H.G. **Lehmann**, *Die Agrarfrage in der Theorie und Praxis der deutschen und internationalen Sozialdemokratie*, Tübingen 1970.

Mao Zedong, 'Analysis of the Classes in Chinese Society' and 'Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan', SelWks 1, 13–22 and 23–62.

D. **Mitrany**, *Marx against the Peasantry*, New York 1961.

E. **Preobrazhensky**, *The New Economics* (1926), Oxford 1965.

→ agrarian reform, agribusiness/agronomy, agriculture, collectivisation, cooperative, destructive forces, earth, ecology, exploitation, ground-rent, Indio question, land reform, latifundism, ownership/property, peasants, peasants movement, peasant war, ruinous exploitation, smallholders/small peasants, sublation, urban/rural (dichotomy), village community

→ Agrarreform, Agrobusiness, Aufhebung, Ausbeutung, Bauern, Bauernbewegung, Bauernkrieg, Besitz/Eigentum, Bodenreform, Destruktivkräfte, Dorfgemeinde, Erde, Genossenschaft, Grundrente, Indiofrage, Kleinbauern, Kollektivierung, Landwirtschaft, Latifundismus, Ökologie, Raubbau, Stadt/Land

CHAPTER 2

Black Marxism

A: al-mārksīya as-sawdā'. – F: Marxisme noir. – G: Black Marxism. – S: marxismo negro. – R: blak-marksizm, čërnyj marksizm. – C: hēirén Mǎkèsīzhǔyì 黑人马克思主义

The term describes black intellectuals' critical dialogue with Marxism, rather than a clearly defined trajectory of thought to be readily inserted into the Marxist tradition. The geographical centre of BM is the Caribbean and North America, even as the re-centring of the roots of African Americans and the interaction with Pan-Africanism has made the history of the continental origins an equally important topic of analysis.

The first large-scale independence efforts by Black Americans and Caribbeans emerged after the First World War, after hundreds of thousands of them moved from the still largely agrarian South into the urban areas of the North. Although the *Universal Negro Improvement Association*, led by Marcus **Garvey**, was neither Marxist inspired nor anti-capitalist oriented, it served as a reservoir for people of African descent and demonstrated the growing self-awareness and high capacity for mobilisation among the group's followers to the CPUSA, founded in 1919, and the Comintern. The "Negro Question" stood henceforth on the agenda of the Comintern congresses. In contrast to Garvey's focus on Africa, they pressed for the right to self-determination for blacks on the American continent, culminating in the thesis of a 'black nation' (within the American), which should secede and found its own state. The colonial question was also deeply connected to 'black nationalism', so that alongside Pan-Africanism, which emerged around the turn of the century, the Red International of Labour Unions under the leadership of George **Padmore** recruited African and African-American workers as well (well documented in the organ *The Negro Worker*).

It was this political context, which led many blacks in the 1930s into leadership positions of the North American CP, in which one of the foundational texts of BM emerged: W.E.B. **DuBois**' major study *Black Reconstruction*, which is about the situation and self-discovery of African-Americans during and after the civil war. DuBois speaks of a general strike to describe the mass exodus of slaves and impoverished whites out of the South and the struggle of 180,000 blacks on the side of the Union Army. He sees them being robbed of the benefits of their achievements – which were decisive in the outcome of the war – when the defeated plantation owners allied themselves with the white lower class

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_003
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

after the war to prevent a land reform and suppress the black population. Their alliance with the major economic powers of the North and the radical Republicans broke apart as soon as the economy of the southern states was brought under control; a very superficial form of "reconstruction". Subsequently, '[t]he abolition of American slavery started the transportation of capital from white to black countries where slavery prevailed [...]. When raw material could not be raised in a country like the United States, it could be raised in the tropics and semi-tropics under a dictatorship of industry, commerce and manufacture and with no free farming class' (1935, 48). DuBois took this as evidence of his original thesis which claimed that slavery was not merely the basis for the plantation economy in the southern states, it was also a condition for accumulation of U.S. capitalism altogether; that slavery was not a historical aberration but was instead structurally anchored in the emerging system of the capitalist world economy. Racist ideologies also advanced the compulsory character of work in the colonies.

Thus **DuBois** also began to have reservations about the orthodox Marxist position, which sees class antagonisms as fundamental and assumes a unitary proletarian class subject. Proponents of BM repeatedly insisted that mechanisms of exploitation do not function in the same way towards each of the individual sectors of the working class. This refusal to treat racism as a secondary contradiction or subcategory of economic class struggle gave BM a strategic affinity to those feminist theories which replaced the "woman question" of the traditional workers' movement with the demand for the autonomy of the women's movement and the question of gender be given its due importance.

It is striking that many of the original "black Marxists" were also activists in labour or black movements. That connects them to the major figures of classical Marxism in the 19th and early 20th cent. while also differentiating them from the representatives of "western Marxism" of central and western Europe, whose theoretical proposals emerged at a distance from political practice.

Marxism's fusion of theory and practice as well as its historical explanatory power impacted a list of leaders of national independence movements in Africa. Marxism was mostly discovered at a certain point in the anti-colonial struggle, often in the metropolises of the colonial empires with their more tolerant political atmosphere. It served to provide a theoretical clarification of these struggles which categorised them within the historical process of imperialism. The Italian invasion of Ethiopia had an enormous politicising effect on this generation – comparable to the impact the Spanish Civil War had upon the European Left. But Marxism remained just an auxiliary science of history, whose applicability for the African situation was to be tested in individual cases. Amílcar **Cabral** criticised the idea, that 'history begins only with the

development of the phenomenon of "class", and consequently of class struggle', because this implied that entire periods and 'various human groups [from the discovery of hunting, and later of nomadic and sedentary agriculture] in Africa, Asia and Latin America were living without history, or outside history, at the time when they were subjected to the yoke of imperialism' (1969, 77).

The engagement with history is also an aspect of the multifaceted work of C.L.R. **James**, another key figure of BM, whose path was atypical, since he went from Marxism (of Trotskyist origin) to anti-imperialism, rather than in the opposite direction. With regard to the role of the masses in history, the dialectic of revolutionary leaders and masses, as well as the cultural specificity of the black slaves, James was in agreement with **DuBois**. 'Men make their own history, and the Black Jacobins of San Domingo were to make history which would alter the fate of millions of men and shift the economic currents of three continents' (**James** 1963, 25). This is a key sentence from *The Black Jacobins*, a history of the Haitian slave revolt led by Toussaint **Louverture**. The investigation emphasises the world historical importance of these events, which are given little more than a footnote in the traditional historical accounts of the French Revolution, while also elevating the slaves to the status of historical actors who were no longer helplessly subjected to their fate.

Despite a growing distance from Trotskyism, **James** adhered to the historical mission of the always complexly structured proletariat and the unavoidability of a socialist revolution for his entire life. This differentiated him from contemporaries such as **Padmore**, Aimé **Césaire** or Richard **Wright**, who turned their backs on communism because of their disappointment about the instrumentalisation of the race question. But it also separated him from the Black Power Movement of the 1960s, the real inheritor of "Black Nationalism", despite **James** being a popular speaker on North American campuses. That Stokely **Carmichael**, the leading figure of Black Power, like **James**, **Garvey**, **Padmore** or Eric **Williams** came from the Caribbean, underscores the significant intellectual tradition of this region.

With the subsequent creation of Black Studies at U.S. colleges, BM was also partially honoured, but shared the fate – despite all radical rhetoric – of most academic Marxisms, the de-coupling from social movements. The Guyanese Walter **Rodney, James**'s last major student, who combined revolutionary theory and praxis, was murdered in 1980.

Hans Gustav Klaus
Translated by Robert Ogman

Bibliography

P. **Buhle**, *C.L.R. James*, London 1988.
A. **Cabral**, 'The Weapon of Theory', *Revolution in Guinea*, New York 1969.
J.-U. **Davids**, 'C.L.R. James', H. Heuermann/B.P. Lange (eds.), *Contemporaries in Cultural Criticism*, Frankfurt 1991.
W.E.B. **DuBois**, *Black Reconstruction in America. 1860–1880* (1935), Cleveland 1969.
P.J. **Hountondji**, 'Marxism and the Myth of an "African Ideology"', S. Hänninen/L. Paldan (eds.), *Rethinking Marx*, AS, vol. 109, Berlin 1984.
C.L.R. **James**, *The Black Jacobins* (1938), New York 1963.
G. **Padmore**, *Pan-Africanism or Communism?*, London 1956.
C.J. **Robinson**, *Black Marxism*, London 1983.
W. **Rodney**, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, London 1972.
E. **Williams**, *Capitalism and Slavery* (1943), New York 1966.

→ biologism, central contradiction, class in itself/for itself, colonial mode of production, colonialism, ethnicity, imperialism, inner colonialism, Jacobinism, Marxism, national liberation, people without history, race and class, racism, slavery/slave society, Western Marxism, women's movement

→ Biologismus, Ethnie/Ethnizität, Frauenbewegung, geschichtslose Völker, Grundwiderspruch, Imperialismus, innerer Kolonialismus, internationalistische Bewegung, Jakobinismus, Klassenanalyse, koloniale Produktionsweise, Kolonialismus, Marxismus, Marxismus-Feminismus, Masse, Migration, nationale Befreiung, Rasse und Klasse, Rasse/Klasse/Geschlecht, Rassismus, Sklaverei/Sklavenhaltergesellschaft, westlicher Marxismus

CHAPTER 3

Capital-Editions

A: ʾiṣdārāt ar-raʾsmāl. – F: éditions du *Capital*. – G: *Kapital*-Editionen. – R: izdanija *Kapitala*. – S: ediciones de *El Capital*. – C: *Zīběnlùn* bǎnběn 《资本论》版本

'As long as there have been capitalists and workers on earth no book has appeared which is of as much importance for the workers as the one before us'. This is how **Engels** begins his review of *C I* in the *Demokratisches Wochenblatt* (1868, no. 12 (28 March), MECW 20/231 [MEW 16/235]). Franz **Mehring** declared *Capital* (which in the meantime had been completed with **Engels**'s publication of volumes II and III after **Marx**'s death, something that **Mehring** does not specifically acknowledge) to be the 'most important work of scientific communism' (1898/1922, 292). **Marx** himself understood *Capital* to be 'the most terrible missile that has yet been hurled at the heads of the bourgeoisie (landowners included)' (to Johann Philipp **Becker**, 17 April 1867, MECW 42/358 [MEW 31/541]). Once insight into the economic laws of capitalism has been established, 'all theoretical belief in the perpetual necessity of the existing conditions collapses, even before the collapse takes place in practice' (to L. **Kugelmann**, 11 July 1868, MECW 43/69 [MEW 32/553 et sq.]). **Marx** was aware that this work would summon 'into the field of battle the most violent, mean and malignant passions of the human breast, the Furies of private interest' (*C I* [Preface to the first German edition] MECW 35/10 [MEGA II.5/14; MEW 23/16]).

Three people were involved in the publication. The first (1867) and second (1872/73) German editions of volume I were edited by **Marx**; the French edition (1872–75) was thoroughly revised by him, and the declaration '*entièrement revisée*' on the title page is used 'by no means as a mere phrase […] for I have had a devil of a job with it' (to **Sorge** 21 June 1872, 44/399 [33/492]). It was **Engels** who edited the third and fourth German editions (1883, 1890), as well as the English edition of *C I* (1887), and who also published *C II* (1885) and *C III* (1894). Although, to the very last, he entertained the idea of publishing Book IV on the history of the theory, he could in fact no longer realise this goal 'after eliminating the numerous passages covered by Books II and III' (36/6 [24/8]), based on *Ms 61–63* (II.3) (letter to **Kautsky**, 22 November 1894, 50, 368, fn. 427 [39/322, fn. 353]). Karl Kautsky attended to this task in the certainty that he was acting according to **Engels**'s intentions (on the history of the publication, see **Sander** 1983 and **Marxhausen** 1990). He recognised that a publishable book could never

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_004
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

result from a process of 'simple deletion' (1905, IX), due to the entanglement of passages involving theory and the history of theory; the complete reworking of 'important sections' was not an option. Therefore, instead of 'a *continuation* of the first three volumes', he published the material as a 'parallel work to "*Capital*"' (X) under the title *Theories of Surplus Value* in three parts between 1905 and 1910. The criticism (not least politically motivated) by the editors of the German edition of MEW that the edition did not 'live up to the standards of a scholarly **Marx** edition' (IML 1965, XIV) ignores the fact that **Kautsky** was confronting similar problems to those that **Engels** had to solve with *C II* and *C III*.

Whether the posthumous editions reflect **Marx**'s intentions and his scientific standards, especially given **Engels**'s editing of *C II* and *C III*, or whether **Engels** offers only 'a specific interpretation' of **Marx**ian theory (**Wygodski** 1993, 120) is a controversy known as the "Marx-Engels problem" (addressed by, among others, **Backhaus**/**Reichelt** 1994; **Heinrich** 1995; **Ollman** 1995; **Jahn** 1996; and **Vollgraf** 1996). In ML (**Leontiev** 1970, 10, 301; **Jahn** 1988, 35), this discussion was circumvented by invoking **Engels**'s editorial commentary (MECW 36/5–9 [MEW 24/7–13]; 37/6–11 [25/8–15]). The assessment of the editors of the *C II* working manuscript also applies to the work on the third volume: Engels did not want to 'deliberately change' **Marx**'s text; 'rather, numerous divergences are explained merely as compensations for deficiencies in the source. In these cases, **Engels** corrected explicit mistakes or completed abbreviated passages' (**IMES** 2005, 522). Only a part of **Marx**'s manuscripts 'can be seen as fair copies; another part, during the process of their writing, took on the character of deliberations for purposes of self-clarification rather than for presenting positions that had already been reached' (501), compelling **Engels** to intervene.

The MEGA^2 edition of the complete manuscripts provides materials that attest to the magnitude of the task **Engels** took on. Without him, it is probable that even *C I* would not have appeared: 'Dear Fred, Have just finished correcting the *last sheet* (49th) of the book. [...] So, *this volume is finished*. I owe it to *you* alone that it was possible! Without your self-sacrifice for me I could not possibly have managed the immense labour demanded by the 3 volumes', **Marx** wrote on 16 August 1867 at '2:00 a.m.' to **Engels** (MECW 42/405 [MEW 31/323]).

In the labour-movement press, *C I* was received with extensive reviews (reproduced in **Dlubek**/**Skambraks** 1967, 158–92). Introductions followed, such as by Johann **Most** (1873), whose second German edition **Marx** extensively reworked (MEGA II.8/733–87), as well as by Carlo **Cafiero** (1879), Ferdinand **Domela Nieuwenhuis** (1881), Gabriel **Deville** (1883), and Edward **Aveling** (1892). 'Popular' presentations of *C I* then followed, for example, by **Kautsky** (1887) and the three volumes by Julian **Borchardt** (**Marx** 1919). Karl **Korsch** (1932/1970) published a reprint of the second edition of *C I* with commentary.

The glorification of the first volume as the 'gospel' (Ludwig **Kugelmann** to **Engels**, 25 November 1867, cited in **Dlubek**/**Skambraks** 1967, 121) and the 'bible of socialism' (*Der Vorbote*, Geneva, 1868, quoted in II.9, App., 778), or the 'bible of the working class' (cited in **Engels**, MECW 35/35 [MEW 23/39]) drew attention away from the volumes that followed; even **Mehring**'s *Geschichte der Sozialdemokratie* has no separate presentation of these volumes. According to **Engels**, the **Marx**ian critique of political economy was combined with the 'materialist conception of history' so that 'socialism became a science' (*Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, MECW 24/305 [MEW 19/209]). In the process of circulation, however, the end of the original German sentence disappeared: 'a science that first of all needs to be further elaborated in all its details and nexuses' (ibid., transl. corr., EC). That this also was meant to apply to the still-pending *Capital* volumes is clear. During the editing of *C III*, **Engels** observed that '[o]ur theory is thereby provided for the first time with an unassailable basis while we ourselves are enabled to hold our own successfully against all comers' (to **Bebel**, 4 April 1885, MECW 47/271 [MEW 36/293 et sq.]). Indeed, 'as far as the socialist movement as a whole was concerned', according to Rosa **Luxemburg**'s 1903 diagnosis, 'the new volume made practically no impression in the wide regions where the ideas expounded in the original book had become dominant' (1903/2010, 76 [GW 1/2, 365]), although, as an overview of the problem (**IMES** 2003b, 441 et sqq.) has shown, a need had existed since the middle of the 1870s. The reaction to *C III* came principally from the marginal utility school (**Böhm-Bawerk** 1896), in which the theory of the price of production was pitted against the value theory of *C I*. Marxist theoreticians first turned to *C II* and *C III* in the 20th cent.; they were chiefly concerned with the theory of accumulation and reproduction from the angle of a possible "collapse" of the capitalist mode of production (**Hilferding** 1910; **Luxemburg** 1913, *Accu*; **Bukharin** 1920; **Sternberg** 1929; **Grossmann** 1929). At the beginning of the 21st cent., the connection **Marx** diagnosed in 1867 between the 'accumulation of wealth at one pole' and that of 'misery, agony of toil, slavery, ignorance, brutality, mental degradation, at the opposite pole' (MEWC 35/640 [MEW 23/675]) was experienced worldwide in a new way under the banner of neoliberal globalisation, likely bestowing a new wave of popularity on *Capital*.

1. "*Work in progress*". – *C I* was only one stage, albeit a fundamental one, in the research process that **Marx** initiated in the mid-1840s and was not even close to completing by the time of his death in 1883. In the 1859 *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, he was still announcing six books: '*Capital, landed property, wage-labour; the state, foreign trade, world market*' (MEGA II.2/99;

MECW 29/261 [MEW 13/7]). By 1867, mention of this disappears. When volume I is published as '*The Process of Production of Capital*', Marx informs us that: 'The second volume [...] will treat of *the process of the circulation of capital* (*Book II*), and of *the varied forms assumed by capital in the course of its development* (*Book III*), the *third* and last *volume* (*Book IV*), the *history of the theory*' (MECW 35/11 [MEGA II.5/14; MEW 23/17]).

Capital was conceived during the heyday of English industrial capitalism, an accelerated phase in the development of the forces of production and the natural sciences; the first features of what would be understood as monopoly capitalism began to appear at the turn of the century. According to the survey by the editors of *C III* (**IMES** 2003b, 446–48), **Marx** did research on the banking system (to **Engels**, 15 November 1868, MECW 43/160 [MEW 32/204]) as well as the history of finance and banking, the role of the stock exchange, the banking and stock-exchange legislation of different countries, on the means of circulation, gold outflow, overspeculation and exchange rates, the development of share capital, above all in railways (to **Danielson**, 10 April 1879, MECW 45/353 et sq. [MEW 34/372 et sq.]), the history of trade, as well as the forms of agrarian capitalism in the USA and in some colonies. He paid increasingly greater attention to the credit system (to **Engels**, 30 April 1868, MECW 43/20 et sq. [MEW 32/74]). Readings in, among other things, chemistry, minerology, geology, and agricultural chemistry accompanied his study of publications on agronomy and the theory of rent (MEGA IV.26; IV.31). This material provided him with insights into the modified driving forces and mechanisms of the capitalist mode of production; it could not simply be "inserted" into the existing manuscripts and draft plans. *C II*, but especially *C III*, could not "be completed" because study necessarily lagged behind practice, and the point at which theory could finally penetrate "empirical evidence" remained unattainable. **Marx** was aware of the consequences this had for *C I*: He intended to rework it after the publication of the subsequent volumes (to **Danielson**, 13 December 1881, MECW 46/161 [MEW 35/246]). It is not only the critique of political economy as a whole that needs to be understood as a "work in progress", but also its individual parts, as the layered revisions to *C I* demonstrate. Therefore, a *historical-critical* study of these parts is required, however not in order to look for "the truth" of *Capital* in its earlier versions (**Bidet** 2004, 10) but to gain clarity on the 'learning process' of '**Marx** as a lifelong researcher', which has to be 'of great interest to us who are affiliated to him' (**Haug** 2005a, 224). The wish to apprehend the **Marx**ian crux, an open-ended process of development, in a theoretically closed way was inherited from **Engels**. Criticism of his solutions must be measured by whether his detractors can provide better editions. There have been attempts at this, for example by Maximilien **Rubel**, who put forward a new version of *C II*. He con-

sidered it '*une grave erreur*', 'a grievous mistake' on the part of **Engels**, to have presented the volume as a finished work (1968, 501).

The Latin-American Spanish translation by Pedro **Scaron** takes the layered revisions of *C I* into account by documenting at least a part of them in the footnotes, which earns it the status of a partly critical edition (**Marx** 1975). In 1997, a 'more scientific edition' of the three volumes appeared in Japan, 'in six books with a general index volume', based on the MEGA² and provided with numerous annotations indicating the newest findings of research into the manuscript sources (**Miyakawa** 1999, 262).

2. *C I from 1867 to 1890*. – Soon after its publication, work began on the various translations of *C I*. The Russian edition was the first to have been realised. Work was begun in 1869 by Mikhail A. **Bakunin**, continued by German A. **Lopatin**, and finished by Nikolai F. **Danielson**; the volume appeared in 1872 in St. Petersburg (on the history of the translation, see **Saikin** 1983, 16 et sqq.). The inspired prose style of **Lopatin**'s translation became the basis of the translations of *C II* and *C III* provided by **Danielson** (28 et sq., 32). Absorbed by the IWA's activity on behalf of the communard refugees, **Marx** could not realise his intention to rewrite the first chapter 'in a more popular manner' and limited himself to 'a few alterations' (as he explained in a letter to Laura and Paul **Lafargue**, 24–25 November 1871, MECW 44/265 [MEW 33/341]). The projected second Russian edition (which first appeared in 1898) was to be structured according to the French edition and be 'always carefully' collated with this and the second German edition (to **Danielson**, 15 November 1878, MECW 45/343 [MEW 34/358]).

The second German edition, which was first published in nine instalments between summer 1872 and spring 1873 and only thereafter in book form, was designated as an 'improvement' (MEGA II.6/59). The amendments comprise more detailed divisions, the clarification of theoretical assertions and concepts, stylistic editing, the translation of foreign terms, as well as the addition of new footnotes. Some sentences that could have been seen to blur the distinction between the **Marx**ian and **Hegel**ian methods were deleted (MEGA II.6/704; MECW 35/17 [MEW 23/25]) – for example, 'the development of the presentation later leads, through its own dialectic, to those more concrete forms' (MEGA II.5/457; compare with II.6/522). The revision was based on corrections made in **Marx**'s personal copy and his manuscript 'Additions and Changes' (II.6/1–54); these were also the sources for the French edition, on which work began at the same time. Not all intended changes could be incorporated by the time of the print deadline (II.6/701; MECW 35/13 [MEW 23/18 et sq.]).

In the French edition – *Le Capital*, traduction de M. J. **Roy**, entièrement revisée par l'auteur – the subtitle '*Critique of Political Economy*' is omitted on

the jacket and title page; the addition of '*First Volume – Book I*' is shortened to '*Livre premier*' and moved to the Table of Contents at the end of the volume; and the title of Book I, which also appears only there, is changed from '*The Process of Production of Capital*' [*'Der Produktionsprozeß des Kapitals'*] to *'Développement de la production capitaliste'* (MEGA II.7/3 and 19). This edition appeared in instalments as well, comprising about 40 pages each; the price of three francs each ensured presales of 8,000 copies for the first instalment (to **Sorge**, 21 June 1872, MECW 44/399 [MEW 33/492]). When the first instalments appeared, the second German edition had still not been printed. **Marx** made numerous linguistic and stylistic modifications that deviated from the new German edition. In a 'Note to the Reader' appended as an afterword in 1875, Marx explained that Joseph **Roy**'s attempt to 'scrupulously [*scrupuleusement*]' produce a version 'as exact and even literal as possible' had 'compelled [*obligé*]' him to 'modify his text, with a view to rendering it more intelligible to the reader'. 'Having once undertaken this work of revision, I was led to apply it also to the basic original text (the second German edition), to simplify some arguments, to complete others, to give additional historical or statistical material, to add critical suggestions, etc.' The edition therefore 'possesses a scientific value independent of the original and should be consulted even by readers familiar with German' (MEGA II.7/690; MECW 35/24 [MEW 23/31 et sq.]). With a view to a revised second Russian edition, **Marx** wrote on 15 November 1878 that the division into chapters should follow the French edition and that it should be ensured 'that the translator compares always carefully the second German edition with the French one, since the latter contains many important changes and additions' (to **Danielson**, MECW 45/343 [quoted in Karl **Marx** and Friedrich **Engels**, *Briefe über das Kapital*, 1954, 237; see also MEW 34/358]). Along with this recommendation, **Marx** warns: 'I was also sometimes obliged – principally in the first chapter – to "*aplatir*" [flatten] the matter in its French version' (ibid.). These parts, he stipulated, were 'to be translated exclusively from the *German text*' (to **Danielson**, 28 November 1878, MECW 45/346 [MEW 34/362]). In 1886, in contrast to **Marx**'s self-assessment, **Engels** saw the revisions only 'as an indicator of what the author himself was prepared to sacrifice wherever something of the full import of the original had to be sacrificed in the rendering' (Preface to the English edition, MECW 35/33 [MEW 23/37]). Against this, Wolfgang Fritz **Haug** has argued that '**Marx** had at that point come up against the limits of the translatability of his own text' (2005a, 228). Suddenly not able to fall back on expressions of his mother tongue, he appears, according to **Haug**, to have become especially alert to the 'danger of lapsing into speculative dialectics' (229) and to have more clearly emancipated his historical materialist understanding of dialectics from **Hegel**'s. In comparison to the second German

edition, revisions in the French edition are more frequent, especially in the section on the accumulation of capital (MEGA II.7/487–630).

The announcement of the third German edition as an 'enlarged edition' (II.8/39) refers to the sharpening of concepts and clarification of statements. The basis for this was provided by **Marx**'s lists of revisions in preparation for this and a planned US edition (7–36), which took into account the impact of the second edition, Marx's dispute with Adolph **Wagner** (MECW 24/531–559 [MEW 19/355–83]), and **Marx**'s reworking of **Most**'s popularisation. **Engels** incorporated the greater part of the revisions (MEGA II.8/57; MECW 35/28 [MEW 23/33]) and inserted annotations. Elucidating **Marx**'s usage of quotations, he explained why Marx cited almost no German economists (61; 29 [35]).

The English edition, *Capital: A critical analysis of capitalist production* (London, 1887), was translated from 1883 to 1886 by Samuel **Moore** and Edward **Aveling**; it is based on the third German edition. **Engels** warns against measuring its terminology against that employed in contemporary economic literature: 'Every new aspect of a science involves a revolution in the technical terms of that science' (MEGA II.9/12; MECW 35/33 [MEW 23/37]). In the view of the MEGA editors, the edition 'exhibits no significant revisions in terms of theory' (**Falk**/**Zschaler** 1990, 203). They overlook that the translation of the title of the first section 'Waare und Geld' and that of the first chapter 'Die Waare' (MECW II.8/63) into 'Commodities and Money' and 'Commodities' (II.9/29), respectively, take into account the caveat **Marx** directed against "concept-dialectical" readings of *Capital*: '*Exchange-value*, without at least two of them, does not exist' (MECW 24/533 (emphasis only in the German text) [MEW 19/358]). This is an important clarification for understanding the theory obscured by a print error in the third posthumous edition, an error that continued to appear in MEW editions until and including the 33rd printing of 1989 ([23/53]; on this, see **Haug**, 1992/2005, 114 et sq.).

The fourth German edition (1890) is declared to be 'revised' (MEGA II.10/3). **Engels** assures us 'that all this laborious process of emendation has not produced the smallest change in the book worth speaking of' (23; MECW 35/38 [MEW 23/42]). He explained, 'I would not commit myself unequivocally' (to **Sorge**, 29 April 1886, MECW 47/439 [MEW 36/476]) to **Marx**'s orientation of basing further German or other language editions on the French edition. What this entails specifically is documented in a comparative table compiled by the MEGA editors (MEGA II.10, App., 732–83).

2.1 *Changes to the German and other language editions.* – The modifications made or planned by **Marx** attest to the rigour of his scientific project (**Bidet** 2004, 10) and his understanding of *C I* as an "ongoing", never definitively fin-

ished process. By contrast, **Engels** saw his task as that of *faithfully transmitting* the work. The incomplete adoption of **Marx**'s directions may in some cases be attributed to differing conceptions and in others to overwork. From 1883 on, the international movement no longer permitted him to play 'second fiddle' (to **Becker**, 15 October 1884, MECW 47/202 [MEW 36/218]). In the Preface to *C III*, **Engels** points out (MECW 37/5 et sq. [MEGA II.15/5 et sq.; MEW 25/7 et sq.]) that due to the demands placed on him as political adviser, as theoretician and the interpreter of "Marxism", as well as the editor of new editions of earlier writings by himself and **Marx**, only the winter months were available to him for editing *Capital*. Parallel to work on *C II*, he prepared the third German edition of *C I*. While also working on the English edition of *C I* and its fourth German edition, he had to make time-consuming editorial decisions on the third volume.

Variations on the subdivision of content. – A prospectus written by **Marx** for the second German edition shows that 'the complaint that it is hard to get one's bearings in the long chapters' is 'remedied by division into short subsections and the addition of a detailed table of contents' (MEGA II.6/55). The six chapters of the first edition became seven sections complemented by chapters with detailed subdivisions. The headings form a kind of subject index whose absence had been criticised by Ludwig **Kugelmann** (to **Marx**, 15 October 1868 and 14 February 1869, II.6, App., 1117). The divisions highlight theoretical and political nodes: for example, the '*twofold character of the labour embodied in commodities*' as the 'pivot on which a clear comprehension of political economy turns' (II.6/75; MECW 35/51 [MEW 23/56]) is highlighted by a chapter subdivision; likewise with 'The Fetish Character of Commodities' (102–113; 81–94 [85–98]). The subdivisions of the section 'The Production of Relative Surplus Value' (311–477; 317–505 [331–530]) highlight the historical emergence of the capitalist mode of production as well as its social consequences for the working class, above all in chapter 13 'Machinery and Modern Industry'. In the first edition, wages were a part of the chapter 'Further Investigations on the Production of Absolute and Relative Surplus Value' (II.5/433–456); in the second edition, they have their own separate section to emphasise the importance of this question.

The French edition has still more detailed subdivisions of content than the second German edition. It is divided into eight sections instead of seven, and has 33 chapters instead of 25, the chapters being further subdivided into numerous subsections. The English edition adopts this structure almost without exception. That **Engels** did not adopt these divisions for the third and fourth German editions, although **Marx** judged them to be '*better than in the German*' (II.8/21), might be due to his wish not to confuse readers who had become used to the first and second editions.

Value and exchange value. – In the first German edition, **Marx** announces: 'In what follows, when we use the word "*value*" without further specification, we are always referring to *exchange value*' (II.5/19, fn. 9). This was bound to make value theory still more difficult to understand. In preparing the second German edition, he considered adding the subheading 'The Two Factors of a Commodity: Use Value and Exchange Value' (II.6/3) to the chapter 'Commodities' (17); in the end, he decided on 'The Two Factors of Commodities: Use Value and Value (the Substance of Value and the Magnitude of Value)' (69; MECW 35/45 [MEW 23/49]). The variant of the main heading 'The Form of Value' (MEGA II.5/7 [7]) has been changed to 'The Form of Value or Exchange Value' (II.6, App., 818; 80; MECW 35/57 [MEW 23/62]). This formulation was retained in successive editions.

The twofold character of the labour embodied in commodities. – **Marx** asserts among 'the best points' in his book to be, '(this is fundamental to *all* understanding of the FACTS)[,] the *two-fold character of labour* [...] which is brought out in the very *First* Chapter' (to **Engels**, 24 August 1867, MECW 42/407 [MEW 31/326]; see MEGA II.5/22). Yet, it was not until the second edition that the memorable definition appeared: 'On the one hand, all labour is, speaking physiologically, an expenditure of human labour power, and in its character of identical abstract human labour, it creates and forms the value of commodities. On the other hand, all labour is the expenditure of human labour power in a special form and with a definite aim, and in this, its character of concrete useful labour, it produces use values' (II.6/79 et sq.; 35/56 [23/61]).

The form of value. – While **Marx** was reviewing the proof sheets of the first German edition, **Kugelmann** convinced him 'that most readers needed a supplementary, more didactic explanation of the form of value' (II.6/700; 35/12 [23/18]). **Engels** too criticised the confusing presentation (to **Marx**, 16 June 1867, 42/382 [31/303]). These suggestions resulted in an '*Appendix to Chapter I, 1.*', which, in contrast to the chapter text, is extensively subdivided to convey the successive steps of the argument (compare II.5/22–43 with 626–49). In the second German edition, the text, the Appendix, and the '*Ergänzungen und Veränderungen*' ('Additions and Changes') make up a new composite (35/57–81 [23/62–85]; analyses in **Hecker** 1987a and **Lietz** 1987). **Marx**, however, did not adopt **Engels**'s suggestion that he add an 'excursus [...] which will by historical means demonstrate to the philistine the need for the development of money and the process by which this takes place' (16 June 1867, 42/381–382 [31/303]; and **Marx** to **Engels**, 22 June 1867, 42/384–385 [306]).

Just as with the beginning, the ending too underwent a substantial modification: Of the 1864/65 manuscript of *C I*, only what **Marx** titled 'Sixth Chapter. Results of the Immediate Process of Production' ['Resultate des unmittelbaren

Productionsprocesses'] (II.4.1/24) was ever published. It is concerned with the reproduction of relations of production and constitutes the transition to volume II. When the idea was abandoned to publish both volumes together as one, the chapter was eliminated. In the first edition, volume I closes with a part of this text: 'The immediate result of capitalist production is the *commodity*, albeit commodity pregnant with surplus value. We are thus thrown back to our point of departure and with it to the sphere of circulation. However, what we have to consider in the next volume is no longer the simple *circulation of commodities* but the *process of the circulation of capital*' (II.5/619). The passage is omitted in all successive editions.

Fetishism. – In the first German edition, the *'Fetishism of the Commodity Form'* is treated only in an appendix (637). Starting with the second edition, it is no longer defined as the *'Fourth Property of the Equivalent Form'* (ibid.) but instead forms the conclusion of the first chapter (II.6/102–13; 35/81–94 [23/85–98]), which establishes its relation to the form of value as a whole.

The functions of money. – In the chapter 'Money, or the Circulation of Commodities' (II.6/121–64), the statements on money as the measure of values are strikingly altered because this section, in **Marx**'s estimation, had been 'treated negligently' in the first edition (II.6/700; 35/12 [23/18]). With a more precise definition of the substance of value, the value-measuring function of money is established as its 'first chief' function (121; 104 [109]). By way of repositioning, the distinction between money as measure of value and standard of price is followed by an examination of price formation (compare II.5/59 et sq. and II.6/124; 35/107 et sq. [23/113]). With reference to *CCPE*, the presentation is broadened to include, among other things, the consequences of bimetallism (II.6/123, fn. 53; 35/106, fn. 1 [23/111 et sq., fn. 53]).

'The transformation of money into capital'. – In reworking this chapter, **Marx** stressed that 'the simple circulation of commodities' is 'a means of carrying out a purpose unconnected with circulation, namely, the appropriation of use values' (170; 35/163 [167]), whereas in the first edition 'the simple circulation of commodities [...] has, in *use value*, an external limit imposed on it' (II.5/107). The definition of the 'movement of capital' as having 'no limits' (II.6/170; 35/163 [23/167]) is supplemented: The circulation of capital involves value that 'valorises itself' (172; 35/165 [169]).

The purchase and sale of labour power. – In order to underscore the significance of the discovery of the commodity character of labour power, a note (II.6/54) was borrowed from the preliminary studies for the second German edition that focuses on the transformation of labour power into a '*commodity* which is his [the worker's] property' and of his labour into wage labour, as is characteristic of the 'capitalist epoch' (186, fn. 41; 35/180, fn. 1 [23/184, fn. 41]).

Marx points to the connection between this fact and the generalisation of the 'commodity form of the products of labour' (ibid.).

The rates of surplus value and of profit. – In the second German edition, **Marx** clarifies that the rate of surplus value 'is, in no sense, an expression for the absolute amount of exploitation' (227, fn. 30A; 35/227 [232, fn. 30a]); in so doing, he was reacting to misconceptions current in socialist circles (to **Engels**, 14 April 1870, 43/479 [32/474]). In the chapter 'Changes of Magnitude in the Price of Labour Power and in Surplus Value', he indicates that 'in Book III' it will be shown that 'with a given rate of surplus value, we may have any number of rates of profit, and that various rates of surplus value may, under given conditions, express themselves in a single rate of profit' (II.6/488; 35/524 [23/546 et sq.]). An illustrative mathematical example from the French edition (II.7/452 et sq.) was included in the third German edition (II.6/496 et sq.; 35/524 [23/546]) in the list of revisions (II.8/11, 24).

Absolute and relative surplus value. – In the French edition, at the end of the chapter *'Plus-value absolute et plus-value relative'*, **Marx** inserts a critique of John Stuart **Mill**'s explanation of the genesis of surplus value (II.7/446–48), which he recommended be adopted in further Russian editions (to **Danielson**, 28 November 1878, 45/346 [34/362 et sq.]), and which **Engels**, following **Marx**'s 'marginal notes' (II.8/28), had inserted into the third German edition (II.8/490 et sqq.; 35/517 et sqq. [23/539 et sqq.]).

Machinery. – Intervening in the debates of the IWA on the consequences for the working class of the capitalist use of machinery (21/9 [16/315]), **Marx**, in the second German edition, put forward the argument that 'in a communistic society there would be a very different scope for the employment of machinery' because it would be used 'for the exclusive purpose of cheapening the product' (II.6/382 and fn. 116A; 35/396, fn. 2 [23/414 and fn. 116a]).

The collective labourer. – In the second German edition, it is said that the labour process originally united 'the labour of the hand with that of the head. Later on, they part company and even become deadly foes. The product ceases to be the direct product of the individual, and becomes a social product, produced in common by a collective labourer, i.e., by a combination of workmen, each of whom takes only a part, greater or less, in the manipulation of the subject of their labour' (478; 35/509 [531]). Following the French edition (II.7/440), the third German edition emphasises that '[i]n order to labour productively, it is no longer necessary for you to do manual work yourself; enough, if you are an organ of the collective labourer, and perform one of its subordinate functions' (II.8/484; 35/510 [23/531]).

Wages. – While in the first German edition, 'The Two Basic Forms of Wages: Time Wages and Piece Wages' make up a single section (II.5/440), in the second

German edition the presentation of these ideas is made clearer by giving each a separate chapter (II.6/504–19; 35/542–58 [23/565–82]). In many smaller changes made to the French edition (II.7/461–83), the specifics of wages are worked out. In referring to the effect of national differences in wages on the world market (II.5/545 et sq.; II.6/652 et sq.; 35/558 et sq. [23/583 et sq.]), the "six-book plan" appears once again. A note added to the French edition (II.7/484, fn. 50) is taken into the third German edition (II.8/528, fn. 64A; 35/559, fn. 1 [23/584, fn. 64a]).

Accumulation and reproduction. – **Engels** criticises the presentation of the theory of accumulation (II.5/456–574) for its gaps, with 'some important particulars being merely alluded to' (II.8/57; 35/28). **Marx** must have shared this impression, for he emphasises that in the French edition the section was 'substantially revised' (to **Sorge**, 4 April 1876, 45/114 [34/178]), while **Engels** described it as 'revising almost completely the entire theoretical section' (to **Sorge**, 29 June 1883, 47/42 [36/45]). In it, the section '*Accumulation du capital*' begins with a brief indication of the phases through which capital passes, whereby the role of the market is emphasised (II.7/487 et sq.; 35/565 [23/589]). In the third German edition, when the point about 'capitalist production on a progressively increasing scale' (II.8/545; 35/578 [23/605]) is made in the chapter 'The Conversion of Surplus Value Into Capital', the capitalisation of surplus value by individual capitalists as well as the mechanism of increased reproduction is more clearly expressed. The criticism of **Sismondi**'s theory of accumulation (II.8/547, fn. 21B; 35/580, fn. 2 [23/607]), upon which **Senior**'s theory of abstinence rests (560 et sqq.; 35/592 et sq. [623 et sqq.]), was brought over from the French edition. **Marx** underlines the compulsory nature of the capitalisation of surplus value 'by means of progressive accumulation' (556; 588 [618]).

The organic composition of capital. – In the first and second German editions, within the treatment of 'The General Law of Capitalist Accumulation', it is stated that 'the development of accumulation' brings about 'an immense revolution [...] in the *relation* between the mass of means of production and the mass of the labour power activating them. This revolution is reflected in the *changing composition of capital value as regards its constant and variable parts* or in the shifting relationship of its *value components* as translated into means of production and labour power. I call this composition the *organic composition of capital*' (II.5/501; II.6/568). The French edition puts this determination into the form of '*remarques préliminaires*' and moves it to the beginning of the newly divided first subchapter of this section and changes this relation – which appears simple but is actually unclear because it mixes the material and value aspects – into a relation between two relations, a technical relation with mater-

ial parameters and a value relation (II.7/534). In its far-reaching reorganisation of the chapter, the third German edition takes over this theoretical development so consequential for the thesis of the tendency of the falling rate of profit: '[T]he organic composition of capital' is understood as its 'value composition [...] in so far as it is determined by its technical composition and mirrors the changes of the latter' (II.8/575; 35/608 [23/640]). The emphasis is now shifted to the twofold determination of the empirical changes. **Marx** wanted to absorb from the French edition the significantly modified and considerably clearer new exposition of the chapter's second subsection, the 'Relative Diminution of the Variable Part of Capital Simultaneously with the Progress of Accumulation and of the Concentration that Accompanies it' (II.8/15, 31; compare 616 [23/650 et sqq.]). **Engels** did not satisfy this wish, taking from the French edition only the 'Introduction and Insertions' (31). On the other hand, he did include the combinations of the relative diminution of variable capital and the increase in the total capital that are worked through in the French edition in the case of the industrial reserve army (II.7/549–70; compare II.6/573–590; 35/623–42 [657–77]).

The concentration and centralisation of capital. – In the first and second German editions, *'Koncentration'* designated the concentration of previously independent capitals in the hands of ever fewer capitalists 'with a corresponding command over a larger or smaller labour army' (II.5/503; II.6/570; compare 35/620 [23/653]). In the French edition, "concentration" is sometimes substituted by '*centralisation*', depending on whether the topic involves the continuous retransformation of surplus value into capital, which lets its quantity grow, or the merger of existing capitals (e.g., II.7/546 et sq.). The third German edition draws a distinction: 'Capital grows in one place to a huge mass in a single hand, because it has in another place been lost by many. This is centralisation proper, as distinct from accumulation and concentration' (II.8/589; 35/621 [23/654]; compare II.6/571; analysis in **Hecker** 1987b, 48). This distinction takes into account the accelerated formation of joint-stock companies in the last third of the 19th cent., which absorbed innumerable individual capitals. The same occurred with the characterisation taken from the French edition of the 'credit system' as a 'specific machine for the centralisation of capitals' (II.8/589; compare 35/622 [23/655]).

The Irish question. – The chapter 'The General Law of Capitalist Accumulation' ends with statistical data on its realisation in Ireland (II.5/565–74; 35/688–703 [23/726–40]), prompted by **Engels**'s suggestion (1 September 1867, 42/417 [31/334]). In the second German edition's treatment of the wage relations of Irish agricultural workers, **Marx** adds a source from 1870 that confirms the statements made in the first edition (II.6/641, fn. 187A; 35/697, fn. 1 [23/733, fn. 186d]).

However, Marx added several columns of text (and many footnotes) to the French version, most of them involving the situation of Irish agricultural workers as well as England's policies of impoverishment and depopulation, '*comme sur un mot d'ordre donné d'en haut*' ('as if in obedience to a command from on high', 35/698 [23/734]). In a footnote added to the end of the chapter, he announces that he will come back to this issue 'in this work's second volume dedicated to landed property'. **Engels** translated these insertions almost literally and integrated them into the third German edition, except that he translated 'second volume' as 'Vol. III' (35/702, fn. 2 [23/739]), a sign that he had given up on what was still **Marx**'s intention to combine volumes II and III into one.

Primitive accumulation. – As with the first and second German editions, in the fourth, which is taken as the basis for MEW, it states: 'The history of this expropriation, in different countries, assumes different aspects, and runs through its various phases in different orders of succession, and at different periods. In England alone [...] has it the classic form' (II.5/576; II.6/646: compare 35/707 [23/744]). Ernesto **Laclau** (1985, 37–47) based his condemnation of **Marx**ian theory as Eurocentric on this and similar utterances, in which something of **Hegel**ian Eurocentrism does in fact resonate. However, the history of revisions to *C I* shows how **Marx** worked his way out of such perspectives, therein demonstrating the continued actuality of his theory (**Haug** 1985, 37–47). Drawing on, among other things, studies of Russian agrarian conditions, in the French edition, **Marx** limits the applicability of this thesis to Western Europe. There is no longer any talk of the 'classic form' of the English example, and consequently no normalising of it as the developmental model to be expected worldwide (and to be waited for before any action is taken). Furthermore, Marx reduces the theoretical status of the representation of "primitive accumulation" to that of an '*esquisse*' (sketch) (II.7/634 et sq.). In his polemic against Nikolay K. **Mikhaylovsky**, **Marx** affirms by citing the French edition (not the German or the Russian editions) that the thesis has no validity for countries like Russia: 'It is absolutely necessary for him to metamorphose my historical sketch of the genesis of capitalism in Western Europe into a historico-philosophical theory of general development, imposed by fate on all peoples' (24/200 [19/111]). Marx specified (to Vera **Zasulich**, 8 March 1881, 46/71 [35/167]) that '[t]his whole section [...] be translated according to *the French edition*' (II.8/17), which **Engels** neglected, as was the adoption of a change documenting a paradigm shift in the third German edition.

'*The historical tendency of capitalist accumulation*'. – Here, too, the French edition is enriched by an insertion, which, albeit brief, contributes to the continuing actuality of the work. The text of the second German edition takes over that of the first edition without change: 'Hand in hand with this concentration,

or this expropriation of many capitalists by few, develop, on an ever-extending scale, the co-operative form of the labour process, the conscious technological application of science, the methodical common cultivation of the soil, the transformation of the instruments of labour into instruments of labour only usable in common, the economising of all means of production by their use as the common means of production of combined, socialised labour' (II.6/682). **Marx** made a note that a comma was to be added after "labour" and the following phrase added (as in the French edition): '"the entanglement of all peoples in the net of the world market, and, therefore, the international character of the capitalistic regime"' (II.8/19; compare II.7/679). **Engels** incorporated this change; substituted 'concentration', which had remained in the French edition, with 'centralisation'; crossed out the first and third occurrence of the word 'common'; and substituted 'therefore' ('daher') with 'with this' ('damit') (II.8/712; 35/750 [23/790]).

National debt and the credit system. – In the chapter '*Genèse du capitaliste industriel*', a sketch on the historic role of national debt is inserted; it was incorporated into the third German edition, in which **Marx** states, 'Public credit becomes the credo of capital' (II.8/705; 35/742 [23/782]; compare II.7/671), and 'the national debt has given rise to [...] stock-exchange gambling and the modern bankocracy' (ibid.; 35/743 [783]; compare 672). With this, and without further explication, the 'genesis' of the transformed forms of capital, such as commercial and bank capital, as well as the role of credit, were included 'for the first time in the presentation' (IML 1989, 33*).

2.2 "*Letzter Hand*" (*last authorised*) *Edition.* – Formally, this term indicates the final edition of a work prepared by the author. What this means in the case of *C I* in particular, considering **Marx**'s intentions for further revisions, is the subject of a controversial discussion in scholarly research (**Hecker**/**Hues**/**Kopf** 1989; **Omura** 1989 and 1994). It is true that the second German edition was prepared by **Marx** through to its delivery, but he was convinced of the need 'to rewrite a great part of the text' (II.8/57; 35/27 [23/33]). Nor did he regard the French text as the last word. Lists of revisions (II.8/7–36) as well as notations in his personal copy suggest the direction of the further evolution of the text. It is to be hoped that a future critical edition will make this direction evident in light of the material made available by the MEGA.

3. *Engels's editions of C II and C III.* – After **Marx**'s death on 14 March 1883, **Engels** felt that, alongside the 'tremendous amount of work' involved in preparing the third edition of *C I* (to **Sorge**, 29 June 1883, 47/42 [36/45]), it was his responsibility to publish the remaining volumes. 'Our theory is thereby

provided for the first time with an unassailable basis while we ourselves are enabled to hold our own successfully against all comers' (to **Bebel**, 4 April 1885, 271 [293 et sq.]). In the rapidly internationalising labour movement, issues such as profit, interest, ground rent, competition, crises, joint-stock capital, and the stock exchange were objects of lively discussion, and, as the MEGA^2 editors clarify through presenting the sources, it was expected that **Marx** would provide scientific support (IMES 2003b, 441). In response to repeated requests for a continuation (**Dietzgen** to **Marx**, 16 January 1876, 21 August 1879, 3 January 1882, see ibid.), Marx had answered that he would 'finish off the 2nd vol. [...] as soon as possible' (to **Danielson**, 13 December 1881, 46/161 [35/246]). In the meantime, Eugen **Dühring**, among others, took up the issues, which made him increasingly popular in socialist circles. It was precisely for this reason that volumes II and II had to appear. Added to this was **Engels**'s concern that with his demise there would be no 'text, both printable and written in a legible hand' (to **Becker**, 20 June 1884, 47/152 [36/163]), because he was the only '*living soul* who can decipher that writing and those abbreviations of words and style' (to **Lavrov**, 5 February 1884, 93 [99]).

Since **Marx** 'always refrained from telling' even those nearest to him 'how far his work had progressed' (**Engels** to **Lavrov**, 2 April 1883, 3 [3]), it was first necessary to establish an overview of the state of the drafts and other materials. Regarding 'Vol. II', **Engels** felt that '[a]longside parts that have been completely finished are others that are merely sketched out, the whole being a *brouillon* with the exception of perhaps two chapters. Quotations from sources in no kind of order, piles of them jumbled together, collected simply with a view to future selection. Besides that, there is the handwriting which certainly cannot be deciphered by anyone but *me*, and then only with difficulty' (to **Bebel**, 30 August 1883, 53 [56]). In terms of content, he wrote 'The second book will greatly disappoint the vulgar socialists, it contains virtually nothing but rigorously scientific, very minute examinations of things that take place within the capitalist class itself, and nothing at all out of which to fabricate catch-words and orations' (to **Kautsky**, 18 September 1883, 58 [61]).

The basis for *C II* consisted of ten manuscripts dating from 1865 to 1881 in varying stages of elaboration (II.4.1; II.4.3; II.11); for *C III* the material consisted of the 'main manuscript' (II.15/7; 37/7 [25/11]) dating from 1864–65 (II.4.2) and material gathered in envelopes labelled 'belongs to Volume II' and 'belongs to Volume III' (for an analysis see **Miskewitsch/Wygodski** 1985). **Engels** examined his correspondence with **Marx** for possible indications on structuring the contents of *C III*; Samuel **Moore** delivered an expert opinion on **Marx**'s attempts to come to grips mathematically with the rates of surplus value and of profit (II.14/351–59); **Engels** searched **Marx**'s collections of excerpts (for an overview,

see IMES 2003a, 397). The fragmentary nature of the literary remains compelled **Engels** to edit the work in stages collected in editorial manuscripts, of which the one for *C II* has survived (II.12).

3.1 **Engels**'s guiding editorial principle was 'that the book I publish should be unmistakably a work by **Marx**' (to **Lavrov**, 28 January 1884, 47/89 [36/95]), thus 'presenting **Marx** in Marx's own words' (to **Sombart**, 11 March 1895, 50/462 [39/429]). As he familiarised himself with the materials, his enthusiasm grew for **Marx**'s 'tremendous discoveries' (to Laura **Lafargue**, 8 March 1885, 47/264 [36/286]). The urge to communicate these, as well as the occasional underestimation of the task confronting him – he even believed to be able to publish *C II* and *C III* by the end of 1884 (to **Becker**, 20 June 1884, 151 et sq. [162]) – drove him to publish books II and III as independent volumes (to Laura **Lafargue**, 16 February and 31 March 1884, 104, 122 [111, 131]).

Engels, like **Marx** (to **Danielson**, 10 April 1879, 45/356 [34/373]), distinguished between capitalist production as a 'gigantic process of value creation' and the capitalist system as a 'system of swindling and deceit increasingly detached from production' (**Vollgraf** 2006, 23), as the 1892 Panama scandal demonstrated (II.15/430; 37/437 [25/455]). From the presumed certain fall in the rate of profit, **Engels** deduced 'the inevitable collapse of the capitalist mode of production which is daily taking place before our eyes to an ever growing degree' (26/282 [21/178]; compare 27/267 [22/327]). The concentration and centralisation of capital led to a monopolised economy through which 'the road has been paved, most gratifyingly, for future expropriation by the whole of society, the nation' (II.15/429; 37/436 [25/454]). Despite the rapid economic growth of the USA, which he repeatedly noted, he was convinced that due to its free trade, England was the classical basis and most fitting place to study the economic laws, which is why the updates in *C III* drew on examples from England (II.9/14; 35/35 et sq. [23/39]; 24/392 et sq. [19/264]; to **Danielson**, 24 February 1893, 50/111 [39/38]). By contrast, since the late 1870s, **Marx** saw the USA as the model of capitalist development (to **Danielson**, 15 November 1878, 45/344 [34/359] and 10 April 1879, 45/354–56 [370–73]; I.25/443; **Vollgraf** 2006, 35).

3.2 *C II*. **Engels**'s Preface, dated 5 May 1885, **Marx**'s birthday, opens: 'It was no easy task to prepare the second book of *Capital* for publication, and do it in a way that on the one hand would make it a connected and as far as possible complete work, and on the other would represent exclusively the work of its author' (36/5 [24/7]). **Engels** still expected *C II* to 'cause great disappointment, being a purely scientific work with little in the way of agitation. By contrast the third

volume will again have the effect of a thunderbolt, since the whole of capitalist production is dealt with in context for the first time and all official bourgeois economics rejected out of hand' (to **Sorge**, 3 June 1885, 47/296 et sq. [36/324]). In contrast to **Engels**'s apprehensiveness, Rosa **Luxemburg** testified in 1913 that due to the recent publication of *C II*, 'no more did the problem of crises obscure the real crux of the problem: for the first time, the argument centred purely in the reproduction of capital as a whole, in accumulation. Nor was the analysis bogged any longer by an aimless fumbling for the concepts of income and of individual and aggregate capital. **Marx**'s diagram of social reproduction had provided a firm foothold' (*Accu*, 1913/1951, 274 [GW 5, 230]).

Engels drew on seven of the ten extant manuscripts to produce the final editorial manuscript. This manuscript reflects 'the different phases of the work of selection, assembly, redaction, and correction' (IMES 2005, 498). The editing work relied on **Marx**'s premises for orientation, in which 'commodities are sold at the prices corresponding to their values' (II.4.1/51; II.12/4; 36/31 [24/32]). They are to be understood here not as the precondition for the capitalist process of valorisation but as 'valorised capital itself, pregnant with surplus value'. Their circulation 'which now is at the same time the reproduction process of capital' includes 'further determinations which were foreign to the abstract observation of commodity circulation' (II.4.1/51). '[A]ny changes of value which might occur during the movement in circuits' are to be disregarded (II.12/4; 36/32 [24/32]). The way in which **Engels** implemented **Marx**'s concepts and attempts at ordering the contents can be re-imagined through the 'structural comparison' established by the editors, a 'catalogue of the text passages' and ca. 5,000 'textual discrepancies' between 'the redaction manuscript' and the sources it drew on (II.12, App., 887–1205).

3.3 *C III*. – **Marx** had set himself the task of further developing the theory of value and surplus value through investigations of competition, average profit, the division of profits into industrial and commercial profit, interest, entrepreneurial profit, the forms of surplus value in agriculture, and differential and absolute rent. He never was fully clear as to how the results of these investigations were to become an 'artistic whole' (to **Engels**, 31 July 1865, III.13/510; 42/173 [31/132]). The research process was reflected in the headings of the plans and drafts: 'Third Section. Capital as fruitful. Interest. Profit. (Costs of Production, etc.)' (1858, II.1.2/619), 'Third Chapter. Capital and Profit.' (1862, II.3.5/1598), and 'The Shaping of the Process of Capitalist Production as a Whole' (1864, II.4.2/7). Following the announcement made in the Preface of *C I* (II.5/15; 35/11 [23/17]), **Engels** decided on 'Volume III: The Process of Capitalist Production as a Whole' (II.15/3; 37/1 [25/5]).

Regarding the length of time, from 1885 to 1894, taken up by **Engels**'s editorial work – if the Supplement (II.14/262 et sqq., 323–40; 37/873–97 [25/897–919]) is included, then he worked on volume III up until his death – Carl-Erich **Vollgraf** argues 'that because **Engels** felt the inadequacy of the 1864/65 draft' and 'was conscious that this final volume would determine the further reception of *Capital*, [...] [he] wanted to only send Volume III out into the world after he had himself surveyed and evaluated all significant changes in economic life since 1867 and thus documented that Marxian political economy definitely operated on the basis of the current state of things' (2006, 11). In so doing, he had to mediate between **Marx**'s original intention, the 1864/65 'main manuscript', as well as its presentations of the theoretical analyses of economic development since the end of the 1860s, and to close any theoretically relevant gaps through additions, which in the end involved more than 60 printed pages (16). This, according to Eduard **Bernstein**, brought to light the "**Marx-Engels** problem": 'The more Engels tried to make up for gaps here, the more these sections ran the risk of losing precisely the character that Engels was so at pains to preserve in the book, namely that it in all important respects should be **Marx**'s product' (1894/95, 336).

When **Gramsci** heard from prison of the plans for a Marx-Engels complete edition, he believed that the Moscow Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute would also soon publish *C III* in the MEGA[1] and noted, 'The question of the text of Volume III can be the object of fresh study now that there is available, as I am to believe, the critical edition of all the notes and comments which were to have served for the definitive version. It is not to be excluded that the traditional edition could have left out some passages which, after the polemics that have taken place, could have a much greater importance than might be imagined from the first reordering of the fragmentary material' (*Gef*, N. 10.II, § 36, 431 et sq. [1292 et sq.]).

Steps in the editorial process, editorial interventions. – After the dictation of the 1864/65 manuscript to produce a readable manuscript (to **Lavrov**, 5 February 1884, 47/93 [36/99]), **Engels** tried, as he had with *C II*, to create an overview for himself through markings and notes about the relationship between text sections, in which he took account of **Marx**'s indications (e.g., II.14, App., 721, Erläuterungen [explanations] 168.2–3). He established a content outline for individual chapters, organised notes on substantive and editorial questions, grouped material, and compiled lists (II.14/163–261, 265–74, 279–317). According to a summary established by the editors (**IMES** 2003a, 407–27), his editorial interventions essentially involved the following:

Outline. – The extent of the interventions becomes clear from a comparison of the outlines from 1864/65 and 1894 (II.15, App., 919–24). Wherever possible,

Engels implemented **Marx**'s specifications; the note 'Sections of Volume III of "*Capital*"' goes back to a letter from **Marx** of 30 April 1868 (43/20–26 [32/70–75]). Since the authorship of the divisions and headings is not designated, all of them appear traceable to Marx.

Reorganisation; incorporation of digressions. – **Engels** follows **Marx**'s indications (II.4.2/320, 519 et sq.) or decides himself how to make the 'leading principles' visible (to **Danielson**, 4 July 1889, 48/347 [37/243]). The great number of unlabelled re-orderings – for example, more than 100 in the fifth section – can cause one to forget the 'draft nature of the manuscript' (**IMES** 2004, 917). By removing the surrounding brackets, **Engels** converts many of **Marx**'s digressions into main text, which sometimes makes them appear to be concluding statements. For example: 'The ultimate reason for all real crises', Marx writes (II.4.2/540), 'always remains the poverty' – and **Engels** adds 'and restricted consumption' (II.15/480; 37/483 [25/501]) – 'of the masses as opposed to the drive of capitalist production to develop the productive forces as though only the absolute consuming power of society constituted their limit' (II.4.2/540). That **Marx** is not putting forward a theory of underconsumption here is clear from the immediate context. He says that 'the consuming power of the workers is limited partly by the laws of wages, partly by the fact that they are used only as long as they can be profitably employed by the capitalist class' (II.15/480; 37/483 [25/501]) and that therefore the poverty of the masses is not the cause of underconsumption but the result; 'the ultimate reason' is to be sought in the relations of appropriation of capital and its mechanism of accumulation for the sake of accumulation. A statement was in some cases taken out of context, which had an impact on its reception; for example, a footnote on cooperative factories was taken as evidence of how 'useless' it is 'that this labour of direction is exercised by the *capitalist*' (II.4.2/458, fn. b; compare II.15/377.5–8 and fn. 76; 37/385 [25/401, fn. 76]). In socialist literature, this became a 'much-quoted metaphor of alternative forms of production within society' (**IMES** 2003a, 413).

Specification of restrictions. – **Marx** annotated the order and differentiation of topics, for example in Point 5, 'Credit and Fictitious Capital': 'The Analysis of the Credit System and of the Instruments it creates [...] lies beyond our plan. Here there are only a few points to emphasise that are necessary in characterising the capitalist mode of production in general. In so doing we have to do only with commercial credit. The connection between its development and that of public credit is disregarded here' (II.4.2/469). Since Marx very much does in fact go into this topic, **Engels** relativises his statement: 'An exhaustive analysis of the credit system and of the instruments which it creates for its own use (credit money, etc.) lies beyond our plan' (II.15/389; 37/397 [25/413]). He deals analogously with the announcement that the investigation of the release

and binding of capital presupposes 'for their full development the credit system and competition on the world market'; they 'can only be presented, however, after the general nature of capital is understood' (II.4.2/178). He modifies this to read: 'can only be comprehensively presented' (II.15/114; 37/112 [25/120]).

Substantive additions. – An inventory of 'substantively significant additions' created by the editors (II.15, App., 975–86) – which, however, is limited to 'additional thoughts' and leaves out insertions that cannot be classified as 'independent thoughts' (975) – helps in determining which chapters **Engels** wrote completely (for example, Chapter 4), in large part (as was Chapter 43), or as longer passages (for example, II.15/398 et sqq.; 37/404–06 [25/420–23]).

Updates. – The intention expressed in the Supplement 'Law of Value and Rate of Profit' (II.14/324; 37/876 [25/898]) to 'make some important additions to the text written in 1865 to fit the state of affairs in 1895' was partially realised. From the increased 'competition on the world market', **Engels** concludes 'that the rapidly and enormously expanding productive forces today outgrow the control of the laws of the capitalist mode of commodity exchange, within which they are supposed to operate, impresses itself more and more even on the minds of the capitalists' (II.15/123, fn. 16; 37/121, fn. 16 [25/130, fn. 16]). **Marx**'s observation that Russian commerce left the economic groundwork of Asiatic production untouched is relativised by a reference to subsequent developments (327, fn. 51; 37/332, fn. [346, fn. 51]).

Materials left out. – Not incorporated were, among other things, computations on the relation of the rate of surplus value and the rate of profit (II.4.2/13 et sqq.), some tables (145, 607–14), digressions, and sample calculations. Methodological indications, too, were left out, for example the 'Supplement on the Transition from *Capital I* in Chapter II of this Book' (282 et sq.), despite the assurance that such notations would be left intact 'because they reveal the author's intentions relative to future elaboration' (II.15/7; 37/7 [25/11]). Repetitions are retained, and in part provided with cross-references (e.g., 421; 427 [445]), as when **Marx** 'viewed the subject from another standpoint or at least expressed the same thought in different words' (7; 7 [11]).

Smoothing out of the text. – **Engels** inserted or removed paragraph breaks, and inserted transitions to connect separate lines of thought, but in some cases, he separated what belonged together. For example, the concluding statement – 'The rate of interest is similarly related to the rate of profit as the *market price* of a commodity is to its *value*' (II.4.2/437) – was shifted to the beginning of the following paragraph (II.15/355; 37/362 [25/377]), which changes the conclusion into an opening sentence. He inserted (unmarked) transitions to subdivide compact blocks of text, or he created bridges, such as: 'as we have seen in the two preceding chapters' (360; 367 [383]).

Substantive corrections. – The 1864/65 manuscript (II.4.2) contains substantive and terminological inaccuracies due to thoughts having been 'recorded *in statu nascendi*' (II.15/7; 6 et sqq. [25/11]). In the case of the definition of the organic composition of capital, **Engels** discovered that its specification in the French edition is prefigured in the 1864/65 manuscript, so he incorporated the approximate wording from the third German edition of *C I*, indicating this by a footnote which, however, does not mention the French edition (compare II.15/148; 37/145 [25/155] with II.7/534; II.8/14, 31).

Conceptual changes. – Because **Marx**'s terminology varies and it is not clear in every case which variant he would have preferred in the end, the achievement of uniformity was difficult. **Engels** primarily intervened where the development of concepts was documented by **Marx**'s decisions, for example, in *C I*. Therefore, the concept 'labour capacity' [Arbeitsvermögen], frequently used in the 1864/65 manuscript up to the fifth chapter, was substituted everywhere by 'labour power' [Arbeitskraft] (on the development of concepts in Marx, see **Wygodski** 1982). **Engels** changed the term '*Unternehmungsgewinn*' ['profit of enterprise'] (II.4.2/444) to '*Unternehmergewinn*' ['profit of the entrepreneur'] (II.15/330 [25/350]).

Editorial report; supplements. – Although **Engels** recorded many of his editorial steps for his own use (e.g., II.14/168, 184, 309), he was content with a description of the raw material and the editorial interventions in each section (II.15/6–11; 37/6–11 [25/8–15]). Regarding ground rent, he recounted **Marx**'s 'special studies' in the 1870s and asserted that in this section, 'Russia [...] was to play the same role in the part dealing with ground rent that England played in Book I in connection with industrial wage labour' (II.15/10; 37/10 [25/14]). Marx actually intended to do so originally (to **Danielson**, 12 December 1872, 44/457 [33/549]; to **Lavrov**, 11 February 1875, 45/58 [34/122]), but his studies ended in the determination that it is 'impossible to find real analogies between the United States and Russia' (to **Danielson**, 10 April 1879, 45/357 [34/374]), so **Engels**'s announcement can be doubted (**Vollgraf** 2006, 36 et sq.).

In the second part of the Preface, **Engels** assesses the attempts to solve the "price question" posed to the bourgeois economists in the Preface to *C II*, namely, 'how an equal average rate of profit can and must come about, not only without a violation of the law of value, but rather on the very basis of it' (36/23 [24/26]). At this point in time, Engels had no comprehensive insight, neither into the passages in question in the 1864/65 manuscript (**IMES** 2003a, 399) nor into the editorial difficulties, such that he felt he could say that some 'months will pass' (36/23 [24/26]) before the publication of *C III*. With the expectations that this in turn nurtured, the first attempts towards a solution only began as

of 1889 (overview in IMES 2003c, 482–86), and some of them were assessed by **Engels** (II.15/11–23; 37/11–23 [25/15–30]).

Achievements and limits. – 'In view of the condition of the source texts, **Engels**'s publication of the third book represents an enormous effort of willpower and an eminent achievement' (IMES 2003a, 430). He had to work with the material he had and its state of development is reflected in the great number of interventions. Even if some of them may appear superfluous or questionable, a literal publication of the 1864/65 manuscript would not have produced a third volume. On the title page, Engels limited his own role to that of publisher. This relativises the editorial report and creates the impression that **Marx** had been published exclusively in his own words. An examination of the material conveys a somewhat different picture: What we have before us can, at least in some of its parts, be understood as Marx's work through **Engels**'s understanding of it.

Thomas Marxhausen
Translated by Eric Canepa

Bibliography

E. **Aveling**, *The Student's Marx: An Introduction to the Study of Karl Marx's Capital*, London 1892.

H.-G. **Backhaus** and H. **Reichelt**, 'Der politisch-ideologische Grundcharakter der Marx-Engels-Gesamtausgabe: eine Kritik der *Editionsrichtlinien* der IMES', Internationale Marx-Engels-Stiftung (ed.), *MEGA-Studien*, 1994/2, 101–18.

E. **Bernstein**, 'Der dritte Band des "Kapital". I. Allgemeines', *Neue Zeit*, vol. 13., 1894/95, no. 1, 333–38.

J. **Bidet**, *Explication et reconstruction du* Capital, Paris 2004.

E.v. **Böhm-Bawerk**, *Karl Marx and the Close of His System* (1896), transl. A.M. Macdonald, Clifton (NJ) 1975.

N. **Bukharin**, *The Politics and Economics of the Transition Period* (1920), transl. O. Field, Boston 1979.

C. **Cafiero**, *Il Capitale di Carlo Marx*, Milan 1879.

G. **Deville**, *Le Capitale de Karl Marx, résumé et accompagné d'un aperçu sur le socialisme scientifique*, Paris 1883.

R. **Dlubek** and H. **Skambraks**, *"Das Kapital" von Karl Marx in der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung (1867 bis 1878)*, Berlin/GDR 1967.

F. **Domela Nieuwenhuis**, *Karl Marx: Kapitaal en arbeid*, s'Gravenhage 1881.

W. **Falk** and F. **Zschaler**, 'Zur Geschichte der englischen Erstausgabe des 1. Bandes des "Kapitals"', *MEJb* 12, Berlin/GDR 1990, 203–27.

A. **Gramsci**, *Further Selections from The Prison Notebooks* (*FS*), ed. and transl. D. Boothman, London 1995.

H. **Grossman**, *The Law of Accumulation and Breakdown of the Capitalist System – Being Also a Theory of Crises* (1929), transl. and abridged by J. Banaji, London 1992.

W.F. **Haug**, *Pluraler Marxismus*, vol. 1, Berlin/W 1985.

W.F. **Haug**, 'Der verlorene Buchstabe: Eine symptomale Fehllektüre des "Kapitals"' (1992), id. 2005, 113–19.

W.F. **Haug**, 'Marx' Lernprozess' (2004), id. 2005a, 223–35.

W.F. **Haug**, *13 Versuche, marxistisches Denken zu erneuern*, followed by *Sondierungen zu Marx/Engels/Lenin/Luxemburg*, Hamburg 2005.

R. **Hecker**, 'Die Entwicklung der Werttheorie von der 1. zur 3. Auflage des ersten Bandes des "Kapitals" von Karl Marx (1867–1883)', *MEJb* 10, Berlin/GDR 1987a, 147–96.

R. **Hecker**, 'Einige Aspekte der Textveränderungen von der 2. zur 3. deutschen Auflage des ersten Bandes des "Kapitals"', *MEF* 23, Berlin/GDR 1987b, 43–50.

R. **Hecker**, H. **Hues**, E. **Kopf**, 'Nochmals zur Entstehung und Bedeutung der dritten deutschen Auflage des ersten Bandes des "Kapitals"', *MEF* 27, Berlin/GDR 1989, 223–30.

M. **Heinrich**, 'Edition und Interpretation: Zu dem Artikel von Hans-Georg Backhaus und Helmut Reichelt, "Der politisch-ideologische Grundcharakter der Marx-Engels-Gesamtausgabe"', *MEGA-Studien*, 1995/2, 111–21.

R. **Hilferding**, *Finance Capital: A Study of the Latest Phase of Capitalist Development* (1910), transl. M. Watnick and S. Gordon, London-Boston 1981.

IMES (Internationale Marx-Engels-Stiftung), 'Einführung' (2003a), MEGA, II.14, 381–437.

IMES (Internationale Marx-Engels-Stiftung), 'Marx' Arbeit am dritten Buch des "Kapitals" Mitte 1868 bis 1883' (2003b), ibid., 438–56.

IMES (Internationale Marx-Engels-Stiftung), 'Engels' Redaktion des dritten Buches des "Kapitals" 1883 bis 1894' (2003c), ibid., 457–89.

IMES (Internationale Marx-Engels-Stiftung), 'Karl Marx. Das Kapital. Kritik der politischen Ökonomie. Dritter Band. Hrsg. von Friedrich Engels, Hamburg 1894. Entstehung und Überlieferung' (2004), MEGA II.15, 917–45.

IMES (Internationale Marx-Engels-Stiftung), 'Einführung' (2005), MEGA II.12, 497–523.

IML (Institute for Marxism-Leninism of the CC CPSU/IML of the CC SED (GDR)), 'Einleitung' (1989), MEGA, II.8, 13*–40*.

IML (Institute for Marxism-Leninism of the CC CPSU/IML of the CC SED (GDR)), *Marx-Engels-Jahrbuch* (*MEJb*), vol. 1–11, vol. 12 ed. by the IML of the CC of the CPSU and by the Institut für Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung Berlin, Berlin/GDR 1977–1990.

IML (CC of SED), 'Vorwort', MEW 26.1, Berlin/GDR 1965, V–XXIV.

IML (CC of SED), *Beiträge zur Marx-Engels Forschung* (*MEF*), Berlin/GDR 1977–1990; *Neue Folge*, ed. C.-E. Vollgraf, R. Sperl, R. Hecker, Berlin-Hamburg 1991 et sqq.

W. **Jahn**, 'Die Stellung der beiden Grundformen der Konkurrenz in der Struktur des "Kapitals" und die spezielle Lehre von der Konkurrenz', *MEF* 25, Berlin/GDR 1988, 35–50.

W. **Jahn**, 'Über Sinn und Unsinn eines Textvergleichs zwischen der Engelsschen Ausgabe des dritten Bandes des *Kapital* von 1894 und den Marxschen Urmanuskripten', *MEGA-Studien*, 1996/1, 117–26.

K. **Kautsky**, *The Economic Doctrines of Karl Marx* (1887), transl. H.J. Stenning, London 1936.

K. **Kautsky**, 'Vorrede', *Theorien über den Mehrwert: Aus dem nachgelassenen Manuskript 'Zur Kritik der politischen Ökonomie' von Karl Marx*, Stuttgart 1905, VII–XX.

K. **Korsch** (ed.), *Das Kapital: Kritik der politischen Ökonomie, Erster Band*, reprint of the second edition, Berlin 1932 (Frankfurt a.M. 1970).

E. **Laclau**, 'Diskurs, Hegemonie und Politik: Betrachtungen über die Krise des Marxismus', *Neue soziale Bewegungen und Marxismus*, AS 78, Berlin/W 1982.

L.A. **Leontjew** [L.A. Leontiev], *Engels und die ökonomische Lehre des Marxismus*, Berlin/GDR 1970.

B. **Lietz**, 'Zur Entwicklung der Werttheorie in den "Ergänzungen und Veränderungen zum ersten Band des "Kapitals" (Dezember 1971 – Januar 1872)"', *MEF* 23, Berlin/GDR 1987, 26–33.

R. **Luxemburg**, 'Stagnation and Progress of Marxism' (1903), *Socialism or Barbarism: The Selected Writings of Rosa Luxemburg*, ed. P. Le Blanc and H.C. Scott, transl. E. Paul and C. Paul, London a.o. 2010, 73–80.

R. **Luxemburg**, *The Accumulation of Capital* (1913), transl. from the German by A. Schwarzschild, London 1951.

R. **Luxemburg**, *Gesammelte Werke* (GW), vols. 1–5, Berlin 1970–75.

K. **Marx**, *Das Kapital: Kritik der politischen Ökonomie*. Gemeinverständliche Ausgabe, besorgt v. J. Borchardt, Berlin 1919.

K. **Marx**, *El Capital: Crítica de la economía política*, Libro primero, Edición a cargo de Pedro Scaron, 3 vols., Mexico City 1975.

K. **Marx**, *Zur Kritik der politischen Ökonomie* (*Manuskripte 1861–1863*) (*Ms 61–61*), MEGA II.3.1–6.

K. **Marx**, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, vol. 1, with an introduction by E. Mandel, transl. from the German by B. Fowkes, Harmondsworth a.o. 1976.

K. **Marx** and F. **Engels**, *Briefe über 'Das Kapital'*, Berlin/GDR 1954.

K. **Marx** and F. **Engels**, *Marx Engels Collected Works* (*MECW*), London 1975–2005.

K. **Marx** and F. **Engels**, *Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe* (*MEGA*), ed. IML, Berlin/GDR-Moscow 1975–1989, since 1992 ed. IMES, Berlin-Amsterdam.

K. **Marx** and F. **Engels**, *Marx-Engels-Werke* (*MEW*), vol. 1–42, ed. by the IML of the CC of the SED, Berlin/GDR 1957 et sqq., reprint since 1990 and vol. 43 ed. by the Institut für Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung, Berlin.

Th. **Marxhausen**, 'Kautskys Herausgabe der "Theorien über den Mehrwert"', *Karl Kautsky: Referate und Beiträge der halleschen Konferenz anlässlich des 50. Todestages*, Halle (Saale) 1990, 92–101.

F. **Mehring**, *Geschichte der Deutschen Sozialdemokratie* (1898), 3 vols., 12th edn., Stuttgart 1922.

L. **Miskewitsch** and W. **Wygodski**, 'Über die Arbeit von Marx am II. und III. Buch des "Kapitals" in den Jahren 1866 und 1867', *MEJb* 8, Berlin/GDR 1985, 198–212.

A. **Miyakawa**, 'Japanische Forschungen zu Marx' drittem Buch des Kapital durch die MEGA im Aufschwung', *MEF* 1998, Hamburg 1999, 251–62.

J. **Most**, *Kapital und Arbeit: Ein populärer Auszug aus 'Das Kapital' von Karl Marx* (1873), second revised edition, Chemnitz 1876.

B. **Ollman**, 'Some Questions for Critics of Engels' Edition of Capital', *MEF* 1995, Hamburg 1995, 58 et sq.

I. **Omura**, 'Zum Marxschen Verzeichnis der Veränderungen für eine amerikanische Ausgabe des ersten Bandes des "Kapitals": Welche Ausgabe sollen wir für die letzte von Marx' Hand halten?', *MEF* 27, Berlin/GDR 1989, 216–22.

I. **Omura**, 'Zum Abschluss der Veröffentlichung der verschiedenen Ausgaben des *Kapital* in der MEGA²: von der 3. deutschen Auflage, der "Auflage letzter Hand von Marx" (1984), zur 3. Auflage, "die dem letzten Willen des Autors zu einem bestimmten Grad entspricht" (1991)', *MEGA-Studien*, 1994/2, 56–67.

M. **Rubel**, 'Matériaux pour le deuxième volume du "Capital", livre II: Le Processus de Circulation du Capital (1869–1879)', *Karl Marx, Œuvres: Economie II, édition établie et annotée par Maximilien Rubel*, Paris 1968, 499–863.

O.A. **Saikin**, *Pervuy russky perevočik 'Kapitala'*, Moscow 1983.

Ch. **Sander**, 'Die Edition der "Theorien über den Mehrwert"', *Der zweite Entwurf des 'Kapitals'*, Berlin/GDR 1983, 310–33.

F. **Sternberg**, *"Der Imperialismus" und seine Kritiker*, Berlin 1929.

C.-E. **Vollgraf**, 'Ein "Anti-Dühring" in Marginalien', *MEJb* 12, Berlin/GDR 1990, 126–58.

C.-E. **Vollgraf**, 'Kontroversen zum dritten Buch des *Kapital*: Folgen von und Herausforderungen für die Edition', MEGA-Studien, 1996/2, 86–108.

C.-E. **Vollgraf**, 'Engels' Kapitalismus-Bild und seine inhaltlichen Zusätze zum dritten Band des Kapitals', *MEF* 2004, Hamburg 2006, 7–54.

W.S. **Wygodski** [V.S. Vygodsky], 'Der Platz des Manuskripts "Lohn, Preis und Profit" im ökonomischen Nachlass von Karl Marx', *MEJb* 6, Berlin/GDR 1982, 211–27.

W.S. **Wygodski** [V.S. Vygodsky], 'Überlegungen zu einigen Dogmen der Marx-Interpretation', *MEF* 1993, Hamburg 1993, 107–21.

→ abstract/concrete, accumulation, capitalism, complete Edition of Marx and Engels, composition plans, critique of political economy, Engelsianism, histor-

ical/logical, historico-critical, history, labour movement, law of value, logic of capital, logical method, organic composition, philosophy of history, reading of Capital, research/presentation, science, scientific socialism, tendential fall of the profit rate, Third world, totality, underconsumption, whole

→ abstrakt/konkret, Akkumulation, Arbeiterbewegung, Aufbaupläne, Dritte Welt, Engelsismus, Forschung/Darstellung, Ganzes, Geschichte, Geschichtsphilosophie, Historisches/Logisches, historisch-kritisch, Kapitalismus, *Kapital*-Lektüre, Kapitallogik, Kritik der politischen Ökonomie, logische Methode, MEGA, organische Zusammensetzung, tendenzieller Fall der Profitrate, Totalität, Unterkonsumtion, Wertgesetz, Wissenschaft, wissenschaftlicher Sozialismus

CHAPTER 4

Class Struggle

A: ṣirāʿ ṭabaqī. – F: lutte des classes. – G: Klassenkampf. – R: klassovaja bor'ba. – S: lucha de clases. – C: jiējí dòuzhēng 阶级斗争

1. C is one of Marxism's key concepts, although, as with the term "class", it is not one introduced by **Marx** himself. Before him, bourgeois economists had described the economic anatomy of classes and historians the development of the struggle between them. 'Now as for myself, I do not claim to have discovered either the existence of classes in modern society or the struggle between them. Long before me, bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this struggle between the classes, as had bourgeois economists their economic anatomy. My own contribution was 1. to show that the *existence of classes* is merely bound up with certain historical phases in the development of production; 2. that the C necessarily leads to the *dictatorship of the proletariat*; 3. that this dictatorship itself constitutes no more than a transition to the *abolition of all classes* and to a *classless society*' (to **Weydemeyer**, 5 March 1852, MECW 39/63 et sq. [MEW 28/508]).

1. For **Marx** C is a central form of motion of "civilised" societies – which is characterised by 'the conjunction of the elements of division of labour and class domination with state reproduction of the relations' (**Haug** 2005, 205) – as well as a key mechanism for the future change and self-transcendence of bourgeois society. Since the beginning of settled agriculture, Cs have determined human history. In the *Manifesto* we read: 'Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary re-constitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes' (MECW 6/148 [MEW 4/462]). C is inherent to any human society based on exploitation, but its phenomenal forms are many. 'The specific economic form, in which unpaid surplus labour is pumped out of direct producers, determines the relationship of rulers and ruled, as it grows directly out of production itself and, in turn, reacts upon it as a determining element. Upon this, however, is founded the entire formation of the economic community which grows up out of the production relations themselves, thereby simultaneously its specific political form' (*C III*, 37/777 et sq.; see also *C I*, 35/226

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_005
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

[MEW 25/799; 23/231]). In order to sustainably extort surplus value in a socially binding form, a minority subjects the decisions and actions of a majority to its control and restricts the majority's means of satisfying their daily needs. Such subjection and restriction engenders resistance, which in turn stimulates forces that curb or suppress this resistance.

C is waged not only on the part of the subaltern classes against their subjugation. Both sides are active in C; each blocks the needs and demands of the other; each proceeds more or less consciously according to a strategy; each tries to hold on to their victories (and to the defeats of the other). The ruling classes actively organise themselves to carry out the subjection of the exploited to ensure that the surplus labour transforms itself into wealth and power for themselves. The oppressed offer resistance and develop their own organisational forms.

Marx uses the term "class" differently from the way it is used in most of modern sociology, which, in so far as it does not regard the term as sociologically useless in the first place, follows Max **Weber**'s use. **Weber** – not least in reaction to **Marx** – places classes in a context with markets (*EaS*, 374, 1148); in this, he sees the cause of social divisions in non-market-economy societies emerge through privileges deriving from estate or status, and not in the existence of classes. In his view it is only to a very limited degree that one can speak of classes in relation to pre-modern social forms (302 et sqq.). By contrast, for the entire history of ancient, feudal, and capitalist societies, Marx uses the term "class" irrespective of the existence of social market relations. Even if he speaks less decisively of C when addressing pre-capitalist societies, for him all class societies are characterised by struggle over the extraction of surplus labour – a concept that normally plays no role in sociology. In mainstream sociology there is, beyond a sort of relationship of scale as in the markings on a measuring stick, no hypothesis of a social relation between classes. By contrast, Marx's classes can only be defined in relation to each other, in their mutual antagonism and dependency resulting from oppression and exploitation. From this Edward P. **Thompson** draws the conclusion that conceptually and historically C 'is the prior concept to class, class does not precede but arises out of struggle', for 'classes arise because men and women, in determinate productive relations, identify their antagonistic interests, and come to struggle, to think, and to value in class ways' (1978b, 106 et sq.). In this, he approaches the thesis of his opponent Louis **Althusser**, which is however grounded in a completely different (structural-ontological) way, when the latter writes: '*The C must be put in the front rank*' (1973, 50). '[…] this division does not come later in the story […]' (Fn. 12). If **Thompson** fought for the inscription of the cultural-subjective in Marxist analysis, **Althusser** was concerned with offering an argument against any reformism that contemplated, however temporarily, a pacification of class

antagonism – an argument that was to have no need of recourse to subjectivity. It is 'the exploitation of one class by the other, it is therefore C, which constitutes the division into classes. For exploitation is already C' (50).

The tying of C to 'the general contradiction' (*FM*, 99) allows **Althusser** to postulate a driving force within his conception of history as a subjectless process (and to do so without having to resort to techno-functionalist teleology): C is the 'motor of history' (215, also 1973, 51; see 48 where **Althusser** wrongly ascribes the formulation to the *Manifesto*). The more Althusser breaks away from the strict separation he initially maintained of "science" and "ideology" and directs his attention to the material mode of existence of the ideological, the more he attributes inner-theoretical relevance to the proletarian class standpoint: 'Philosophy "represents" C in the realm of theory' (*FM*, 256). 'Philosophy is, in the last instance, C in theory' (1973, 143: see also 1995, 3 et sq.).

2. While C also operated within ancient and medieval history (with varying intensity and impact), it takes on a special significance within capitalism, not least because of the role attributed to it in the final overcoming of class society. **Marx** breaks off in *C III* just where he turns to this question. However, all of his CPE is informed by it. The extraction of surplus value and its transformation into self-valorising value is at the centre of capital as a process and as a social relation. Accumulation, irrespective of whether it appears in its "original" ("primitive") form based on violence or in its "normalised" form as expanded reproduction, involves the struggle between capital and wage dependents. This fundamental antagonism for capitalist societies "crosses with", is overdetermined by, other antagonisms – initially that between capitalists and landowners around the allocation of the surplus value.

The manifold material, social, and intellectual needs of the workers come up against capital's inherent drive to self-expansion, while capital's 'greed for surplus labour' (*C I*, 243 [MEW 23/250]) is constrained by the resistance of the workers. Within and outside the reproductive circuits of capital the reproduction of labour power follows its own "logic" and its own contradictory impulses (**Lebowitz** 2003). In his analysis of the struggle around the length of the working day in England, **Marx** worked out that what was occurring was a collision between two equally indisputable antithetical rights, namely, the right of the purchaser of labour power to use what he purchased as fully as possible and the right of the seller 'to reduce the working day to one of definite normal duration. There is here, therefore, an antinomy, right against right, both equally bearing the seal of the law of exchanges. Between equal rights force decides. Hence is it that in the history of capitalist production, the determination of what is a working day, presents itself as the result of a struggle, a struggle between collective

capital, i.e., the class of capitalists, and collective labour, i.e., the working class' (*C I*, 243 [MEW 23/249]). The 'force', which decides this or leads to a class compromise, is the momentary relative power of the warring parties in the C, that is, their relation of force. C here takes on the form of a 'continuous struggle between capital and labour' around the 'fixation' of the 'actual degree' of the 'maximum rate of profit' (*Value*, MECW 20/146 [MEW 16/149]).

The forms of the 'now hidden, now open' C (*Manifesto*, MECW 6/482 [MEW 4/462]) are many. As C from below it can find an expression in theft of goods and of time, in sabotage, skipping work, slowdowns and lack of discipline, in jokes and curses just as much as in open campaigns and revolts. It does not always take collective forms. The oppressed will perhaps respond individually to their oppression and exploitation until they develop forms of resistance in which they stand each side by side as a community. Where they do so, it is probable that they will make the mobilising resources that the existing society gives them – for example, the slaves' quarters, the peasant village, the modern (wage-)workplace or urban residential areas – into the bases of their self-organisation.

Solidified traditions in pre-capitalist production forms created a certain stability in the balancing of interests. In capitalism it is more difficult to maintain that balance. Competition, with its constant pressure to accumulate and innovate, bestows a restless dynamic on capitalist societies, which leaves nothing untouched for long. For this reason, the class of capitalists is internally divided. An aspect of the general conditions of existence of capital is that it continually undermines and recreates its own bases, that is, it must reproduce its concrete and specific conditions of existence in changed form. In so doing capital just as ceaselessly calls forth new forms of resistance from its own ranks, for example the resistance of one class fraction against another, as it does from those whose life it constantly turns upside down and reassembles in other forms of subordination.

While the immediate triggers of conflicts may be limited to details of daily exploitation, C always carries within itself the possibility of calling the existing social arrangements fundamentally into question. Where the exploited organise their forces to enter into a collective battle they begin to develop new forms of human associations whose principles, though only in embryonic form, both challenge the existing relations and suggest the contours of another social order. According to the *Manifesto*, in modern capitalist societies the 'actual result' of workers' struggles does not lie in their occasional and all too often temporary victories 'but in the ever-expanding union of the workers' (MECW 6/493 [MEW 4/471]). This association lays the basis for a new and more highly developed form of society.

3. 'The Ten Hours' Bill', **Marx** says in the *Inaugural Address*, 'was not only a great practical success; it was the victory of a principle': a victory of 'the political economy of the working class' (MECW 20/11 [MEW 16/11]). This confronted the driving forces of capital with a set of different needs. As a "war of forms" C involves not only the political forms (state, law, etc.) within which accumulation can proceed but also the construction, consciousness, and organising of opposition movements. The working class occupies a central place in this, although these movements are not entirely constituted by it.

The battles around form are at the same time battles for content; they fill culture and language with living resistance. Where the dominant class has 'an interest and a stake' that class energetically strives to incorporate the practices that stand 'outside or against the dominant mode' of production, or else extirpate them (**Williams** 1973, 12). A 'lived hegemony [...] has continually to be renewed, recreated, defended, and modified'; likewise, its limits have continually to be shown, and it is changed or called into question through external pressure (1973, 112). Valentin **Vološinov** points to the importance of concepts, the importance of cultural perception in this contending for alternative forms of being. 'Sign becomes an arena of the C' (1930/1973, 23).

C in capitalism is marked by contradictory tendencies: on the one hand, by the striving for unity and solidarity in the face of the power of the ruling class; on the other, by a competitively oriented division amongst the exploited and oppressed, in which market relations make themselves apparent. This tendency can be expressed in multi-faceted ways – as nationalism, as racism, as sexism, as "skilled-worker consciousness", as local patriotism, etc. The real history of movements plays out between these poles. Consequently, C takes place not simply *between* but also *within* the classes; it revolves around the practical and theoretical content that concrete situations impart to them and commensurate forms of activity, organisation, and loyalty. Moreover, it takes place on a political terrain that involves a confrontation over the relation to other classes and groupings. As a counterpart to the debate among the rulers about how to oppress, control, and co-opt "those below" or enter into compromises with them, the working class's politics must find answers to the struggles of farmers, immigrants, or students.

Marx's conception, according to which a human is a self-changing being, whose activity includes the creation of social relations, and for whom 'the coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity [or self-change] can be conceived and rationally understood only as revolutionising practice' (*ThF*, MECW 5/7 [MEW 3/6]), undergirds his and **Engels**'s idea that C is the means to abolish class divisions. 'Revolution is necessary, therefore, not only because the ruling class cannot be overthrown in any other way, but

also because the class overthrowing it can only in a revolution succeed in ridding itself of all the muck of ages and become fitted to found society anew' (*GI*, MECW 5/53 [MEW 3/70]). This idea of self-change through the struggle also introduces the *General Rules* of the First International written by **Marx**: 'The emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves' (MECW 23/3 [MEW 16/14]). Later, the same impulse led **Lenin** to speak of 'revolutionary enthusiasm' of the masses during the 1905 Russian Revolution (*Tactics*, CW 9/103 [LW 9/103]) and Rosa **Luxemburg** to especially appreciate the immense leaps in consciousness and organisational progress accomplished by the labour movement during mass struggles (see *Mass*, 2004, 168 et sqq. [GW 2, 93 et sqq.]).

4. Neither **Marx** nor the historians who followed him asserted that the historical process through which a past mode of production is substituted by another takes place in a fully conscious and purposeful way. Humankind, one could say, stumbled into class society, into feudalism or capitalism; it almost accidentally found new modes of organisation for social production, which then spread and covered larger geographic areas. In future social revolutions that overcome capitalism, however, the self-conscious shaping of society will, according to Marx, play a much greater role. Socialist revolutions require a qualitatively different degree of consciousness and organisation. In so far as capitalism represents a totality, it has to be called into question as such. In this, political initiative must be more strongly characterised by theory and ideas.

But how is one to imagine this? **Marx**'s own theory appears too incomplete and ambiguous to provide an answer. For example, in the *Manifesto* there are moments in which historic *alternatives* are presented as possible forms of development of history, alongside others that ascribe a teleological role to the organisation and consciousness of the working class and make capitalism's 'fall and the victory of the proletariat' seem to be 'equally inevitable' (MECW 6/496 [MEW 4/474]). The only possible solution to this dilemma of interpretation is, as Richard **Johnson** (1982) proposes, 'reading for the best **Marx**'. Thus Marx's entire work can be read as a non-teleological theory that recognises human activity as the decisive force of social change, instead of attributing the latter to an extra-human agency such as "history" or "structure" in a way seen as "inevitable".

Marx and **Engels** unequivocally rejected Blanquism and all notions of revolution as an event begun and willed by a minority. They insisted that the social revolution must be the conscious act of a large majority. Consequently, the question of the consciousness and organisation of the working class was of fundamental significance. The task of communists, they pointed out, was not

to form a party separate from the movement of the class but to participate in this movement as its most 'resolute section [...] which pushes forward all others' (MECW 6/497 [MEW 4/474]). They should, as **Engels** wrote about the US labour movement in the 1880s, 'go in for any real general working-class movement, accept its *faktische* starting point as such, and work it gradually up to the theoretical level by pointing out how every mistake made, every reverse suffered, was a necessary consequence of mistaken theoretical views in the original programme' (to **Kelley-Wischnewetzky**, 28 December 1886, MECW 47/541 [MEW 36/589]). Socialists thus must not only criticise the existing forms of society but also the movements opposed to their effects and do so from within these oppositional movements. Thus **Marx** simultaneously supported and criticised the struggles of the cooperative movement and trade unions: 'however excellent in principle, and however useful in practice, co-operative labour, if kept within the narrow circle of the casual efforts of private workmen, will never be able to arrest the growth in geometrical progression of monopoly, to free the masses, nor even to perceptibly lighten the burden of their miseries' (*Inaugural Address*, MECW 20/11 et sq. [MEW 16/12]). The trade unions, he warned, 'fail generally from limiting themselves to a guerrilla war against the effects of the existing system, instead of simultaneously trying to change it' (*Value*, MECW 20/139 [MEW 16/152]). The labour movement should go beyond economic struggles to become a *political* movement, 'that is to say a movement of the class, with the object of achieving its interests in a general form, in a form possessing general, socially binding force' (to **Bolte**, 23 November 1871, MECW 44/258 [MEW 33/333]).

How can such progress in organisation and consciousness be achieved? In the distinction between the "class in itself" and the "class for itself" projected back onto **Marx**, Marxists have found a theoretical concept for the answer. The "class in itself", which is defined by its (antagonistic) relation to another class, is part of a system of social relations, as discussed in the CPE, in which individuals appear only as bearers of these relations. A "class in itself" presupposes no pattern of organised relations between its members, and the latter need have no subjective perceptions in common. By contrast, a "class for itself" assumes common projects and organisational cooperation, active interaction between its members based on mutuality, a shared understanding, and reciprocal obligations. It involves subjectivity, active dialogical communication, and collective action. There is a radical difference between the two categories and the related analyses. The transition from the first to the second category involves a break – theoretically and practically.

In his treatment of the 'epochs marking progress in the economic development of society' **Marx** distinguishes, on the one hand, between changes in the

material forces of production and the 'conflict with the existing relations of production' into which they come 'at a certain stage of development', and, on the other hand, the 'ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out' (*Pref 59*, MECW 29/263 [MEW 13/9]). One thing becomes immediately apparent: There is no direct identity between "membership" in a "class in itself" and a "class for itself", the latter emerging through forms of becoming conscious and fighting out the conflict. Workers do not participate equally in all labour movements, for many of them must contend with enemies who are workers themselves, for example "strikebreakers"; nor is membership in most movements exclusively limited to membership in a class. In none of the major struggles do classes automatically line up as such on opposing sides. This distinction of categories at the same time determines different levels of analysis.

5. In order to justify the hope of overcoming the separation between, or incongruence of, "class in itself" and "class for itself", two approaches have been debated within the labour movement. – 5.1 The first assumes a "factual-objective" blurring of the differences. Accordingly, the actual working class will in time increasingly strive to become conscious of itself as a political actor; in the process the class antagonisms become increasingly "simplified" since further capitalist development positions the class subjects for a final decisive battle between the proletarian majority and the bourgeoisie, which finds itself in the minority. This conception, which assumes that the results of that abstract analysis gradually become reality, lives from the expectation of a historically ineluctable necessity. Before 1914 this belief was very widespread. The practical implementation of socialism seemed only to require that the growing working class first win the right to vote and then exercise it to enable its parliamentary representatives to enact laws for a new society. C became a struggle for a working class that was to act as an "electoral subject". Questions of the "consciousness" of the working class and, by extension, of the "people" were rather secondary. Instead, it seemed sufficient that the workers joined the trade unions and through them Social Democracy in order to support the party in elections. 'C in parliament' (see **Heffer** 1973) became the decisive theatre of political and social change, since the trade unions were limited to defending wages and working conditions. In practice, this was tied to a highly hierarchical vision of a 'socialism from above' (see **Draper** 1966), accompanied by the expansion of bureaucratic forms of party and trade-union organisations, which were critically analysed by contemporary bourgeois sociologists such as Robert **Michels** (1911/1915). At the outbreak of the First World War, in the name of the nation or the empire, these parties substituted C rhetoric with a closing of ranks

with the class of the exploiters, while millions of workers were swallowed up by the bloodiest inter-capitalist war that the world had ever seen up to then.

5.2 Against this prevalent interpretation, a left tendency tried to develop an alternative conception of proletarian-socialist C with far-reaching theoretical and political consequences. Here **Luxemburg** distinguished herself as a champion and sharp theoretician of C. All other struggles, including those of women, are incorporated into the C (*Social Reform or Revolution*, 2004, 149; 'The Proletarian Woman', 244 [GW 1/1, 412 et sq.; 3, 411]). She does not conceive of C as a particular strategy of the labour movement, but as a constituent of capitalist society as of other class societies preceding it. A party cannot therefore simply turn off C – as Social Democracy promised to do at the beginning of the First World War (through its so-called truce policy). With the renunciation of C, the socialist party was transformed 'into a counter-revolutionary factor' (GW 4/89). The party 'is nothing other than the embodiment of the C – borne by consciousness of its historic impact – of the modern proletariat' (GW 2/280). Abandoning C would mean abandoning itself (163). 'Its own leader is in reality the mass itself, that is, conceived dialectically in its process of development'. Its task culminates in bringing 'consciousness of the goal and context into the various local and temporal fragments of C' (GW 4/124).

C requires diverse, indeed contradictory political strategies. For **Luxemburg** they include parliamentarism, which 'has become one of the most potent and indispensable means of C for the aspiring working class' (GW 1/2, 451), as well as extra-parliamentary movements, the mass strike, unceasing press work, and 'direct revolutionary action' (450), which need to be combined with one another. Luxemburg criticised **Engels** for having (in the year of his death 1895, under pressure of the Social Democrats' Reichstag delegation, and misinformed) considered parliamentary struggles as an antithesis of 'direct revolutionary action by the proletariat, and [...] frankly as the only means of carrying on the C' ('Our Program and the Political Situation', 361), thus giving his blessing to the pure nothing-but-parliamentarism of the SPD. 'Parliamentarism as the working class's only redeeming political means of struggle is just as fanciful, and in the last analysis reactionary, as the general strike as the only redeeming approach or the barricades' (GW 1/2, 247). **Luxemburg** insists on the strategic linking of the various forms of C within a socialist perspective. Just as the safeguarding of the capitalist order constitutes the C of the upper class, so it is the transcendence of capitalism 'alone which constitutes the spirit and content of our socialist struggle', which turns it into 'C' ('Speech to the Stuttgart Congress (1898)', 1971, 39). C is the driving force in history; that it is ultimately linked to violence is not a political decision but a question of 'bitter historical

necessity [...] both in individual episodes of C and in the final conquest of state power [...], which is able to lend our peaceful, legal activity its actual strength and impact' (GW 1/2, 247). From her conception of the network character of C Luxemburg developed her idea of the formation of class consciousness as a learning process in the struggle for democratic conditions within the state and while the proletariat 'gains this class consciousness and organizes itself in the course of the struggle, it achieves a democratization of the bourgeois state and, in the measure that it itself ripens, makes the bourgeois state ripe for a socialist revolution' ('In Memory of the Proletarian Party', 1971, 180 et sq.).

5.3 For **Lenin** the workers' consciousness represents a constant arena of struggle where two *rival spontaneities* meet: one that tends to socialism and revolt and the other to limiting itself to bourgeois thinking (*What Is To Be Done?*, 5/396 et sqq. [LW 5/397]). This leads to another conception of the role of socialist party organisation – it ought not simply to be a tool for general socialist propaganda but an instrument with which one can actively intervene in all current struggles of the working class.

In **Lenin**, the sphere of politics acquires greater autonomy; although it is still associated with the underlying structural antagonisms of capitalism, it nevertheless possesses a relative autonomy. Consequently, questions of strategy and tactics take on a new significance. Finally, Lenin's thinking is characterised by the great attention he paid to the need to gather behind the labour movement all those who suffered under other forms of oppression and were only secondarily connected to the antagonism between capital and labour. It is the continual over-determination of Cs that brings the analytic dualism of capitalists vs. proletarians to its limits and even makes holding on to it an impediment to proletarian C itself. 'To imagine that social revolution is *conceivable* without revolts by small nations in the colonies and in Europe, without revolutionary outbursts by a section of the petty bourgeoisie *with all its prejudices* [...] is to *repudiate social revolution*. [...] Whoever expects a "pure" social revolution will *never* live to see it. Such a person pays lip-service to revolution without understanding what revolution is' (1916, 22/355 et sq. [LW 22/363]).

6. In connection with **Luxemburg**'s and **Lenin**'s confrontation with objectivist conceptions of history within the Second International, some basic premises can be outlined, which in any case are present in rudimentary forms in **Marx** and **Engels**: 1. Classes are as political actors themselves just as incoherent as the various movements that attempt to organise their members around common projects; 2. The working class is neither ineluctably revolutionary, nor by nature unified, but rather consists of changing majorities and minorities whose

conflicts move between these poles; 3. The movements' forms of action, conception, and organisation are shaped not only by their own members and their experience but also by their opponents. Therefore the shaping, extent, and goals of the movements are subject to influences from "without" just as they are to continual dialogue from "within"; 4. C cannot be conceived in an economistically "constricted" way, as if it predominantly revolved around questions of wages and working conditions. The underlying struggle between capital and labour shapes questions of racial and ethnic identity and oppression, of gender relations, nationalism and internationalism, of war and peace, or of ecology, and is in turn influenced by all of these. The same occurs through struggles that have no apparent relation to the labour movement, for example, the struggles of farmers or students; for the question of alliances necessarily has a bearing on the capacity of the labour movement to conduct a general struggle against oppression.

This is the only way in which a "class in itself" becomes a "class for itself". C is conducted on the "surface" of society through mediated entities such as movements and parties. Social changes depend on the degree to which such entities develop new institutions (for instance, council-democratic entities), which are in a position to begin constructing new types of social relations and new forms of social, economic, and political power.

Colin Barker

Bibliography

L. **Althusser**, *For Marx*, transl. B. Brewster, London 1969 (French original 1965).

L. **Althusser**, 'Reply to John Lewis' (1973), *Essays in Self-Criticism*, transl. G. Lock, London 1976, 33–99.

L. **Althusser**, *On the Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*, transl. B. Brewster, London 2014 (French original first published posthumously in 1995).

H. **Draper**, 'The Two Souls of Socialism' (1966), *Socialism from Below*, Atlantic Highlands 1992, 2–33.

W.F. **Haug**, *Dreizehn Versuche marxistisches Denken zu erneuern*, with *Sondierungen zu Marx/Lenin/Luxemburg*, Hamburg 2005.

E.S. **Heffer**, *The Class Struggle in Parliament*, London 1973.

R. **Johnson**, 'Reading for the Best Marx: History-Writing and Historical Abstraction', id. et al. (eds.), *Making Histories: Studies in History-Writing and Politics*, London 1982, 153–204.

M. **Lebowitz**, *Beyond Capital: Marx's Political Economy of the Working Class*, second edn., London 2003.

R. **Michels**, *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy*, transl. E. Paul and C. Paul, London-New York 2017.

E.P. **Thompson**, 'Eighteenth-Century English Society: Class Struggle Without Class?', *Social History*, vol. III (1978a), no. 2, 133–65.

E.P. **Thompson**, 'The Poverty of Theory or an Orrery of Errors', *The Poverty of Theory & Other Essays*, New York 1978b.

V. **Vološinov** (1930), *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, transl. L. Matejka and I.R. Titunik, New York-London 1973.

R. **Williams**, 'Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory', *New Left Review*, vol. I (Nov/Dec 1973), no. 82, 3–16.

II. The concept C has fallen into greater disrepute than other core concepts of Marxism. While the (continued) socio-economic existence of classes has been rediscovered in the "advanced" capitalist countries (see **Bader** et al. 1998), C is supposed to belong to 'the vocabulary of another era' (**Heilbroner** 1993, 49). Those who continue to speak of it are either seen as belonging perennially to the past, or as attempting to discredit an opponent on precisely this charge. Even socially and politically progressive movements at times criticise their adversaries as waging "C from above", without seeing themselves as waging "C from below". Thus also the political concept of class – in the sense of workers consciously coming together as a class to struggle against another class – has fallen 'into deep crisis' (**Panitch**/**Leys** 2001, viii).

By contrast **Marx** characterised 'the history of all hitherto existing society' as 'the history of Cs'; **Engels** further specified that this is only the case for '*written* history' (*Manifesto*, MECW 6/482 [MEW 4/462]). C does not disappear 'as long as the various classes with their opposed and conflicting interests and social positions are in existence' (1852, MECW 11/216 [MEW 8/225]). What changes in the course of history are the forms in which C is carried out, not the "final goal" of proletarian C: the emancipation of labour in a classless society (**Marx** to **Weydemeyer**, 5 March 1852, MECW 39/65 [MEW 28/507 et sq.]). Only then, in the words of the *Manifesto*, will the proletariat 'have abolished its own supremacy as a class' and replace bourgeois classes and class antagonisms with an 'association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all' (MECW 6/506 [MEW 4/482]). **Marx** and **Engels** still adhered to this "final goal" for the workers' national and international emancipatory struggle after the defeat of the Paris Commune (1871, MECW 22/426 [MEW 17/421]). The SPD, too, in its *Erfurt Programme*, resolved to fight 'for the abolition of class rule and of classes themselves,

for equal rights and equal obligations for all without distinction of sex and birth' (cited in **Farner**/**Pinkus** 1964, 16 et sq.).

In the course of the 20th cent. it became apparent that capitalist class relations did not – as was expected by the *Manifesto* (see MECW 6/485 [MEW 4/463]) – become 'simplified' but more differentiated. New social strata and groupings with more or less different economic and political interests and cultural goals and values have arisen; the "subjects" or actors of C – or of the social emancipatory struggles –, the momentary relations of force among them, and thus both their (absolute and relative) condition and their short- and long-term goals have changed. Since the relations of force among the classes are fundamentally asymmetrical in favour of capital, the power of capital appears as "normal" and its deployment of C ("from above") is routinely not, or hardly, perceived, while deploying the "power of labour" just as routinely appears openly as C ("from below").

The sphere in which C takes place in capitalism is itself modified by the history of struggles. The relations of force between the classes change, and the struggles move into the supposed original "bastions" of each of the adversaries. Civil-society and political/state institutions are not only that which C contends but are also the terrain of struggle. On the one side, trade unions in the capitalist enterprise and workers' parties in the bourgeois state build up their own positions of power (see **Poulantzas** 1968/1978, 123–41); but the side of capital, too, conquers and occupies positions within the working class or the "subaltern" classes, for example through the founding or support for "yellow" company unions, through "ideologically" influencing (via "apparatuses" such as schools, media, etc.) labour organisations (trade unions, parties) and their possible allies. The history of C in capitalism can thus not be understood without considering the short-, medium-, and long-term economic cycles, without their underlying technological changes and the social structural changes these induce; but at the same time it cannot be reduced to them as is suggested by the concept of 'C cycles' (see **Arrighi** 1981; **Mandel** 1978/1995, 22–48). Political and cultural factors – more or less independently of economic (and technological) factors – always play a significant role.

1. *From the "long" 19th to the "short" 20th cent.* – The struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie begins 'with its birth' (*Manifesto*, MECW 6/492 [MEW 4/470]), and vice versa. In the early 19th cent., spontaneous acts of resistance such as Luddism, sabotage, and the like were at the forefront. With the first workers' organisations (trade unions) the practice developed of mostly factory-based or local economic strikes and later the idea of a national political general strike to win universal male suffrage (the Chartists). In the 1848 revolutions

and during the Paris Commune the military – that is, barricade – struggle was paramount. During the 1860s there arose alongside the trade unions the first political workers' organisations at the national and international level, which set themselves the goal of the 'emancipation of the working class' by means of political power (*Inaugural Address*, MECW 20/5 et sqq. [MEW 16/5 et sqq.]).

In the succeeding decades it was above all German Social Democracy that developed parliamentary confrontation into a "tribune of C" in the perspective of a democratic conquest of power (see **Engels**, *Introduction*, MECW 27/506 et sqq. [MEW 22/509 et sqq.]). In this period the party put special emphasis on the theoretical-cultural C. The party press fulfilled not just informational and organisational functions but also an educational one. Through scientific and popular book publications, educational associations, and later a party school, the German working class in the late 19th cent. was considered the most highly developed in Europe.

In the first years of the 20th cent. there was a clear increase in the number of economic, and occasionally also political, strikes in several European countries. In evaluating the experience of the Russian Revolution of 1905–1907, Rosa **Luxemburg** saw the mass strike as the strategy of C that would tie the economic to the political struggle in the age of the large capitalist factory. The contradictions of the imperialist globalisation of capitalism, which had begun in the last decades of the 19th cent. were discharged in 1914–1918 into the First World War at whose end the 'weakest link in the chain of imperialist states' (**Althusser**, *FM*, 97; cf. **Stalin**, *Foundations of Leninism*, Wks 6/100) was broken by the October Revolution. That the social democratic parties voted for war credits revealed the superficiality of their pacifist internationalism. After the October Revolution the split in the labour movement solidified into a social democratic and a communist tendency. At the same time, C grew beyond its previous national dimensions and entered into a contradictory association with the national liberation movements of the colonised peoples.

For the opposing side, C was conducted both by means of violent direct confrontation and pre-emptive social reform. Already in the formative phase of the labour movement Lorenz **von Stein** had recommended a 'social monarchy' as a proven means against socialism (1850). Similarly, Otto **von Bismarck**'s social legislation was meant not just to improve the conditions of the workers but by doing so also to immunize them 'against the public danger of Social Democratic endeavours', as expressed in the title of the Anti-Socialist Laws of 1878. After the 1918 November Revolution the employers' associations in Germany were prepared for far-reaching concessions to the trade unions if they would only renounce the goal of socialism. The Stinnes-Legien Agreement, named after the chief functionaries of both organisations, was the socio-economic basis of

the 1919 constitutional compromise of the Weimar Republic (see **Kirchheimer** 1930/1969, 33–74, 36 et sqq.). To consider C as the class practice of (at least) two opponents – and thus "relationally" – also means to place social-reformist class compromise in the context of the analysis of the social relations of force of the antagonistic classes (**Poulantzas** 1968/1978, 57 et sqq.).

For **Gramsci**, the defeat of the revolutionary movements in Western Europe after the First World War, especially the defeat of the Turin council movement in 1921, in which he himself played a leading role, was the end of the offensive 'war of manoeuvre' and the (new) beginning of an arduous 'war of position' in the West. He regards the presence of 'a sturdy structure of civil society' in the West – in contrast to Russia – to be the main cause of collapse of the manoeuvre strategy there. 'The State was only an outer ditch, behind which there stood a powerful system of fortresses and earthworks' (*PN* 7, § 16, 238). The complex structures of civil society in the advanced states were to make them much more resistant to economic crises and forms of war of manoeuvre in C such as mass strikes, demonstrations, and violent uprisings, than was earlier supposed within the labour movement – including by Rosa **Luxemburg** (see *PN* 13, § 24, 233). Therefore **Gramsci** felt it necessary to form alliances with other "subaltern" popular strata in the framework of a long war of position and in so doing to end by playing a leading role by dint of a project capable of achieving hegemony worked out by 'organic intellectuals' of the working class. **Lenin** had understood this, **Gramsci** wrote, when he advocated a united front against growing anti-revolutionary tendencies (*PN* 7, § 16, 237 et sq.). However, due to the Comintern's sectarian strategy against Social Democracy (the united front "from below" and the theory of "social-fascism"), the united front failed in the 1920s and in so doing aided German fascism's victory. Only after 1933 did an expanded democratic "Popular Front" strategy in France and Spain against the fascist threat temporarily appear successful in the framework of parliamentary majorities accompanied by extra-parliamentary mass movements. In 1936 in France there were mass strikes with factory occupations and the establishment of workers' councils, which in some ways recalled the period of the 'war of manoeuvre'. But here too French civil society proved a strong bulwark of bourgeois hegemony. The Popular Front broke down after one and a half years owing to the internal and external political contradictions of the petty-bourgeois-proletarian coalition. In Spain, the Popular Front collapsed not least due to the minimal solidarity extended by the Western states to the democratically elected government, which after long battles succumbed to the military force of the Francoists supported by the fascist powers of Italy and Germany. At this late historical moment, it had become clear that since the October Revolution C had assumed international dimensions and that in the national Cs, too,

it was no longer only trade unions, parties, etc., but whole states and state systems that were involved. With the phrase 'cosmopolitan civil war' Ernst **Nolte** (1996) encapsulated the extremely acute international C of the "short" 20th cent. between the First World War and the collapse of "actually existing socialism".

2. *Fascism or New Deal.* – The world economic crisis of 1929 was the point of departure for a new stage of C in the capitalist centres (see **Varga** 1934). Particularly in the USA and Germany, the economic crisis developed into a social and political crisis potentially threatening to the system, but which came up against different conditions and was resolved in different ways. While the German economy was significantly weakened due to the lost war and did not reach the pre-war level of 1913 even in the boom year of 1928, in the US industrial and agricultural production rose in the 1920s. US capital's strength was based on abundant and thus inexpensive raw materials and high labour productivity based on rationalised assembly-line labour within a highly concentrated oligopoly-capitalist enterprise structure and a large domestic market characterised, in comparison to Europe, by high wages and thus a higher level of consumption.

The US labour movement – after initial successes especially in the 1870s and 80s – had remained relatively weak up to the 1920s. Since attempts to found a socialist, and later communist, labour party failed, the trade unions supported the left wing of the Democratic Party and agreed to renounce far-reaching socialist goals. Up through the 1920s they remained exclusively craft unions, which increasingly impeded their combativeness in large-scale industry. Moreover, since the 1920s they were systematically kept out of the factories by Fordist entrepreneurial strategies (wage raises, profit sharing, shorter though more intensive work times, social services, and the like) or impeded by "yellow" company unions. Membership figures – despite growing numbers of employees in industry – sunk during the 1920s, so that there was talk of 'labor in retreat' (**Dulles** 1956, 221–241), which continued even in the first years of the crisis up to the election of Franklin D. **Roosevelt** as president in 1932.

Altogether the policy of the New Deal was a socially and politically progressive alternative to the reactionary or fascist "solutions" of the capitalist economic crisis. **Roosevelt**'s 1932 government programme, written by "left-liberal" intellectuals, declared combating unemployment to be the main goal of the new administration and announced measures diametrically opposed to the prevailing free-trade liberalism and thus similar to what the trade-union movement was demanding. As the moderate leadership of the (craft) unions (AFL)

hesitated to actively support Roosevelt's social programme there were spontaneous mass strikes in 1932–34, which not only led to the founding of modern industrial unions (soon nationally organised as the CIO) but which also became involved in carrying out central legislative reforms such as the Social Security Act, the Wagner Act (National Labor Relations Act), which guaranteed unions representation in factories, the Fair Labor Standards Act, etc. (**Brenner** 2007, 38 et sqq.).

With this, a legislated unemployment and, minimal, old-age insurance was introduced in the US for the first time. But further strikes and other actions were needed to force implementation of the laws in daily factory reality against the continued resistance of the employers – at Ford it was only in 1941 that trade-union rights became anchored in the workplace. Despite job-creation measures, general shortening of work time, etc., the high level of employment at the beginning of the 1920s was only achieved in the context of the war economy.

In Germany, despite high membership figures and broad cultural anchoring the labour movement, due to its internal division, was incapable of action against a radicalising right. The NSDAP owed its rise to the objectively and subjectively desperate situation of large sectors of the petty bourgeoisie, the farmers, and the white-collar employees, whose numbers steadily increased in the 1920s, as well as to the financial and political support of broad sections of big capital, of the large-scale landowners, and of political conservatism. The chief function of German fascism was the smashing of the organised labour movement and the return to the economic and political objectives of German imperialism in Europe and the world (see **Opitz** 1977). That it far overshot these original objectives with its racist-motivated genocide and war of extermination, or fell short of them, contributed to a certain civilising of "C from above" following the Second World War.

3. *Cold War and Fordism.* – After the Second World War, in which fascism was brought down by a temporary alliance of convenience between the major capitalist powers and the Soviet Union, a "socialist camp" was created in the countries of Eastern Central Europe liberated by the Red Army. With the exception of Yugoslavia, the national labour movements only played a small role in the liberation and establishment of the new social and political systems. Although the "people's democratic" and later "socialist" regimes did not arise from national Cs, their mere existence had an effect on the course of Cs in the West.

In the three decades after 1945, the workers and rapidly growing stratum of white-collar employees in the capitalist centres were given far-reaching economic concessions (e.g. wage raises, reduction of work time) and social conces-

sions (e.g. social security systems, co-determination in enterprises), as a result of which, the traditional proletarian mode of existence (insecurity of working and living conditions, etc.) seemed largely to have disappeared (**Feuersenger** 1962; **Mooser** 1984). Parallel to the US's economic, political, and military dominance after the Second World War, the American way of life also became a model in broad sections of the Western European working class. Within a single generation the former proletarian class consciousness gave way to a vague dichotomous image of society ('those above, we below') without a historical perspective of overcoming it (see **Popitz** et al. 1957). In contrast to the traditional worker strata, the numerically increasing group of white-collar employees in industry and the service sector, present a hierarchical social outlook in which the perspective of individual advancement played a decisive role, even though in terms of income level, legal employment status and mode of life, the real differences between it and, for example, the group of skilled workers had gradually been reduced (see **Geiger** 1949, **Mills** 1951, **Mooser** 1984, **Steiner** 1967).

In addition, the traditionally statist outlook of the labour movement also played a role, so that a specifically West European social model crystallised as welfare-state "Fordism". The basis for this model was the economic recovery (or reconstruction boom) of the two first post-war decades, which allowed the trade unions considerable success in economic distribution struggles, while the predominant social democratic parties increasingly distanced themselves from their original goal of a socialist society, and as national cross-class parties ("Volksparteien") essentially limited themselves to the legal improvement of the social conditions of the "employees" within the existing capitalist relations. "Social partnership" and political reformism were implemented in most capitalist states – not just in exchange for the clear improvement of the social condition of wage dependents but also because the example of command socialism (in terms of relative economic backwardness, worker uprisings in the GDR and Poland, and the popular uprising in Hungary) appeared by comparison increasingly unattractive, which was reflected in the decline of the Western European communist parties' influence.

4. *Automation and 1968.* – At the beginning of the 1960s it became apparent in Western Europe and Japan that the post-war boom, which in many countries had eradicated the initial unemployment and led to considerable real-wage increases alongside stagnating, and later even sinking, profit rates, was coming to an end (**Glyn**/**Sutcliffe** 1972, 59 et sq.). With the catchphrase "automation", capital used the pending "rationalising away" of jobs in order to intensify what work remained and lower wages through the "re-evaluation" of activities. The trade unions were then faced with the task, on the one hand, of using

the opportunities afforded by "automation" (reduction of work that is physically hard or unhealthy, the creation of skilled jobs, greater autonomy) and, on the other, of impeding looming job loss, the speed-up of work tempo, and wage decreases (see **Friedrichs** 1965). Thus the demands for shortening of work times, for training and continuing education inside and outside the workplace, as well as increases in real wages proportionate to the increases in productivity achieved by the new technology, were at first purely defensive measures. They only first took on an offensive character in connection with the general democratic movement strengthened by the student movement from the end of the 1960s.

The importance of the student movement for C arises from the fact that starting in the US it associated itself with the general democratic movement (above all the black civil-rights movement) and anti-colonial movement (against the Vietnam War) and arrived at a fundamental critique, which sometimes appeared utopian, of all of industrial-capitalist civilisation. It reached a political high point in May 1968 in France when millions of workers, employees, and intellectuals from nearly all spheres of the economy and society either joined the students' protest or were stimulated by it in the form of strikes and many mass events to present their own material and cultural-emancipatory demands. That the protest collapsed after a few weeks should not obscure the fact that this movement, predominantly in France but also in many other countries, had a long-lasting cultural effect on further economic, political, and theoretical-cultural Cs.

Already in May 1968 parts of the highly skilled work force (master craftsmen, technicians, engineers), which had increased numerically and were dubbed the 'new working class' by Serge **Mallet** (1963), had presented demands for qualitative changes in work that tended to correspond to **Marx**'s understanding of the 'emancipation of workers' as the core of 'universal human emancipation' (MECW 3/280 [MEW 40/520]), that is, the full and free development of each human individual (see **Hillmann** 1970). That the traditional labour strata were also inspired by the student movement is seen in the following years beyond France also in Italy, Great Britain, and the FRG, when there were massive, partly organised, partly spontaneous work stoppages, often even with factory occupations. The years 1968–71 were the most strike-filled and for many wage workers also the most successful materially in all of the post-war years (see **Albers**/**Goldschmidt**/**Oehlke** 1971). Immanuel **Wallerstein** speaks of 'the world revolution of 1968' dominated by a 'recurrent double theme. The first was opposition to US hegemony *and* to Soviet collusion with that hegemony. And the second was disillusionment with the Old Left in all its forms' (2003, 50).

While the attempt at democratisation of "actually-existing socialism" in Czechoslovakia was stopped by the Soviet Army in August 1968, the democratic movements prevailed over the dictatorships in Portugal, Greece, and Spain. Here the activist coalition of workers, partly also – as in Portugal – agricultural workers, intellectuals, and even oppositional military, played an important role (see **Poulantzas** 1975, esp. 68–89). By contrast, in 1973 in Chile, the attempt of the popular front government to establish a socialist society by peaceful means was stamped out by a bloody military coup supported by the US. With this, the US ushered in a new phase of the international C. The coup was 'more than the overthrow of a democratically elected government'; it was 'the end of a world' and occurred in the service of a general process of marketisation, which 'could not have been carried out without neutralising the social pressure' (**Moulián** 2003, 128). Erhard **Crome** regards this as the beginning of the 'real' – not the ideological – 'history of neoliberalism' (2006, 173). In his view, Salvador **Allende** implemented the framework of reformism 'in order to go beyond its limits'; but the rulers 'responded to it as if an armed uprising had taken place' (190).

Although the working and living conditions of workers and simple office workers in the capitalist centres continually converged in the 1960s, the intellectuals (students), the "new working class" (the technological intelligentsia), and traditional worker and white-collar strata were separated above all by cultural differences. Even if broad popular front-like alliances temporarily formed in France and Italy, this did not result in the formation of a politically durable and offensive bloc that could seriously endanger bourgeois hegemony.

5. *Crisis of Fordism, the information-technology revolution, and neoliberalism.* – The 'upheaval in the world economy' (**Fröbel**/**Heinrichs**/**Kreye** 1986) was the consequence of the 1974/75 crisis, which was heralded by the collapse of the Bretton Woods monetary system in 1971 (that had existed since the end of the Second World War) and triggered by the 1973 "oil crisis". The causes of the deepest economic crisis in decades, however, lay in the fall of the rate of profit, which had persisted since the 1960s and which was accelerated by wage raises after 1968 (**Glyn**/**Sutcliffe** 1972, 74 et sqq.). The most important social consequences of the worldwide crisis were the sharp rise in unemployment, which grew to become a structural mass phenomenon in succeeding decades, and the long-term stagnation, if not actual fall, in real wages. The Fordist 'dream of eternal prosperity' (**Lutz** 1984) came to an end for the wage dependents of the capitalist centres.

The crisis was the point of departure of two fundamental processes that lastingly changed the relation of forces of the classes of the capitalist world system to the benefit of capital in the following decades: globalisation and the

information revolution. Capital export from the centres to the periphery and semi-periphery had, in particular since the imperialist phase, been a hallmark of the capitalist world system. However, in the decade following the 1974/75 crisis a systematic "worldwide sourcing" set in not only for raw materials but also for cheap labour and production sites. For the first time, entire branches of industry – mostly labour-intensive and/or polluting ones, among them the traditional textile industry but also specific sub-areas of "modern" industries and services (for example, of electronics and software development) – were moved outside the capitalist centres so that in a few years a new structure of the international division of labour emerged (see **Fröbel/Heinrichs/Kreye** 1986, 73 et sqq., 101 et sqq.).

This process, later called "globalisation", was only possible through the interaction of new communication and transport technologies with a conscious policy of liberalisation of international goods, capital, and financial markets (neoliberalism). The new stage of internationalisation of production contributed to the accelerated development of a wage-worker class in the periphery and semi-periphery that had to work, with low skill and inadequate trade-union organisation, for lower wages with the long working times and poor working conditions of a 'bloody Taylorism' (**Lipietz** 1987, 69 et sqq., quoted in **Hirsch** 1993, 209). This potentially "inexhaustible" industrial reserve army exerted further pressure on the economic and social conditions of existence of the Fordist-integrated working class of the centres.

Finally, this pressure was intensified by automation on the basis of the information revolution. In the FRG (as previously in the US) it had already by the 1970s 'reached proportions that justify speaking of automation as the prevailing mode of production' (**PAQ** 1975, 260). Both processes (i.e., the new international division of labour and automation) prove to be the fundamental hallmarks of the 'high-technology mode of production' of transnational high-tech capitalism (**Haug** 2003, 42), which in the following decades, especially in the capitalist centres, led to a dramatic loss of jobs in the industrial sector and thus also to the substantial weakening of the trade unions that had traditionally been strong in this sector. The job destruction in industry was in no way compensated by the increase in the number of jobs in the service sector, the more so as information technology in many areas of this sector (e.g. in trade, banks, and administration) likewise destroyed numerous jobs or made possible their displacement to "low-wage countries" (as in the case of call centres).

Under these conditions the trade unions were in the long run unable either to implement real-wage increases or hold on to the previously achieved working conditions (for example the 35-hour week) but had to swallow the erosion of normal Fordist working conditions in favour of a "flexibilisation" of labour

(see **Sennett** 1998). The 'insecurity of existence' that **Engels** found in 1891 to be a fundamental characteristic of the proletarian condition (MECW 27/223 [MEW 22/231]) once again describes the working and living conditions of a large section of wage dependents a cent. later. The 'transformation of flexibility into precarity' (**Haug** 2004, 365) produced a growing group of workers without regular jobs (for example, with temporary contracts, or as subcontracted labour, self-employment, etc.) and the protection of collective agreements. Just as the pauperism of the 19th cent. was a direct consequence of capitalist industrialisation, 'so too does the precariousness of labor arise from a central process, driven by the new technological-economic imperatives at the very heart of modern capitalism' (**Castel** 2003, 387). Finally, with the structural consolidation of unemployment, a group of people has formed who are permanently "decoupled" from the world of work and who tend also to be cut off from social participation.

The reaction to these diverse forms of "re-proletarianisation", culminating in de-classing, is by no means a solidarisation among those affected. Rather, the onset of this process has led to an increasing competition between the "normally" and the "precariously" employed, between employed and unemployed, as well as among the unemployed; a condition for which the term "individualisation" seems more euphemistic than analytically adequate. The group of the permanently socially de-classed, that is, the sub-proletariat, is losing its function as an industrial reserve army, because it no longer exerts a competitive influence on the labour market. This then stirs up new conflicts of interest and distribution within the subaltern classes in relation to the welfare state, which frequently takes on xenophobic or racist characteristics.

The tendency to de-solidarisation was reinforced by the fact that the restructuring of the operational labour processes produced a group of "automation-winners" who could achieve privileged working conditions due to special work skills. This new group enlarged the stratum of the so-called "new working class" but without developing the kind of militancy seen in the 1960s. If anything, it is professional-status/corporatist behaviour and organisational structures that appear to predominate. With the decline in the number of workers employed in industry, the trade unions lost members in their traditional strongholds; which the new members out of the service sectors or the group of "automation workers" could not compensate for. Additionally, in the case of youth and women workers, as those most affected by precarisation, steadily continued to lose their appeal. The militancy of the members has clearly declined since the 1980s.

The break with the Fordist accumulation regime was not a natural consequence of capitalist laws of development but the result of a consciously implemented strategy shift of the ruling class(es), the hegemonic project of a "C

from above" (**Yergin**/**Stanislaw** 1998; **Walpen** 2004, 196 et sqq.). The economic objective was a permanent increase in the rate of profit, the political goal the worldwide safeguarding of the hegemony of capital. Neoliberal ideology could achieve its hegemonic position because it was able to represent itself as "being the only alternative", the demiurge of the information-technology revolution. With its demand for higher professional skills, flexibility, responsibility, creativity in the workplace, communications competence in group work, etc., it successfully appealed to the employees' interest in self-determination.

As a result of the neoliberal offensive, the left (i.e., former workers') parties – which at the beginning of the 1970s were still preaching an active social reform policy (the expansion of democracy through the development of the welfare state, democratic education policy, etc.) and in part really pursued it – were put on the defensive. Their retreat led to increasing disorientation or political apathy, especially among the lower, less skilled strata of workers, who now increasingly turned to conservative or neo-fascist parties – a process designated as a 'crisis of representation' (**Bourdieu** 1991, 171–202; **Vester** et al. 2007, 116 et sqq.), yet has still hardly been investigated.

6. *Individualisation and solidarisation.* – With the neoliberal offensive the former forms of solidarity among wage dependents proved ill-adapted to integrating the individual groups of wage dependents. 'In many sociological analyses today the concept of individual has displaced that of class as the main element in the reading frame of social reality', as Robert **Castel** notes when speaking of the apparent 'blurring of social classes' (2003, 7). At the same time, he warns against premature abandonment of the class concept, since the overwhelming majority of the population are still dependent on the sale of their labour power and threatened by the fundamental insecurity of existence.

According to Jean **Lojkine**, an increase of 'social insecurity' has been discernible since the beginning of the 1980s among top-level management and young academics as well: As a whole, the number of unemployed top managers has more than doubled in ten years, and since 1991 the unemployment rate among them has approached the level of the other professions (2003, 52). Despite their divergences, especially in cultural habitus, there were attempts at alliances within the numerous workplace struggles of the 1990s against layoffs and closures that may be viable for the future. The fact that in these struggles 'there is no central actor, no leading, hegemonic group such as the "working class" and its representative institutions as existed from the 1930s to the 60s does not [mean] the end of "Cs"' (56).

That the reality of C cannot be reduced to the abstract scheme of "class against class" was already clear in **Marx**'s *Class Struggles*. Such a scheme is

now less suitable than ever for the analysis of social struggles in the epoch of late capitalism. Social research has developed differentiated approaches to the assessment of this problematic's diverse dimensions, for which Pierre **Bourdieu**'s concept of 'social space' (1982) as a 'field of power' (1998, 31–34) provides the point of departure. Although Bourdieu at times expressly turns against **Marx**'s theory (1982; 1998, 31), he holds that the classes he has constructed are 'more than any other theoretical divisions, [...] predisposed to become classes in the Marxist sense of the term' (1998, 11). By his term he intends a group of people who are mobilised, against another group, for common social and political objectives. 'The "real" class [...] is nothing but the realized class, that is, the mobilized class, a result of the *struggle of classifications*, which is a properly symbolic (and political) struggle' (ibid.).

Turning to the actors of the struggles in the transition from the 20th to the 21st cent., they as a rule involve subjects (individuals, organisations, civil-society associations) with a complex social identity that does not belong to them "in itself" (through specific substantive, e.g. economic, characteristics) but which they themselves produce in the movement of struggle or of alliance with others, that is, produce relationally, discursively. The analysis of socio-cultural "milieus" of socio-political "camps" needs more specific categories, as, for example, Michael **Vester** developed following Edward P. **Thompson** (1963) and **Bourdieu.** These categories make it possible to more precisely assess the range of socio-economic factors that continue to have effect in social struggles by taking account of the growing significance of cultural factors (such as habitus, mentalities, value orientations, etc.) and political-ideal factors (e.g. concepts of freedom, justice, and solidarity) and thus to interpret the heterogeneous phenomena of social conflicts as historically specific forms of C. For example, in the work of **Vester** and others, analytically differentiated levels ('the political-ideological level of class praxis') and axes (the contradiction between forces of production and relations of domination) in the relations of social actors constitute important building blocks for the investigation of long-term changes in class milieu and mentality (1993/2001, 179 et sqq., 204 et sqq.).

7. *Prospects*. – Theoreticians and actors of the new social movements at first assumed that C in the advanced capitalist countries had been "immobilised" by the Fordist class compromise (see **Bergmann** et al. 1969). In part, this articulated the claim of a new academic stratum of the intelligentsia to inherit the social-critical legacy of the traditional labour movement. However, following the collapse of the "actually-existing socialist" camp in the 1990s, neoliberal globalisation was able to prevail unchecked. As the general insecurity of existence reached a historic new level of worldwide dimensions, even capturing the

growing sections of the higher and highly skilled degree holders and workers, the classical "social question" returned to the political agenda. This has resulted in numerous entry points for a strategic alliance between "old" and "new" movements in the struggle against the economic, political, and cultural hegemony of international finance capital and the "new imperialism" (see **Gauthier** 2003; **Deppe** et al. 2004; **Harvey** 2003).

The most important lesson of the experience of Cs in the 19th and 20th cent.s is that there can be no true "emancipation of labour" and of people without the conscious and active participation of the majority of the population. This democratic imperative by no means requires denying the key role of social, political, and cultural vanguards; it does demand, however, that the latter never act and prevail in place of the majority. Their leading role can only consist in winning over the majority – through an enlightening, politically and culturally convincing programme – to a new organisation of work and life based on real freedom, equality, and solidarity.

Such self-emancipation can no longer be conceived as the deed of a single class in the narrow sense. It is true that at the beginning of the 21st cent. the number of people living from the sale of their labour power for wages is greater than ever, and even the number of (male and female) workers employed worldwide in capitalist industry clearly surpasses all earlier periods in this respect. However, it is by no means certain that they constitute the majority of the world's population – indeed not even definitely the majority of all who are economically exploited and politically and culturally oppressed. A plurality of social actors as well as objectives and models is needed.

Werner Goldschmidt

Bibliography

D. **Albers**, W. **Goldschmidt**, P. **Oehlke**, *Klassenkämpfe in Westeuropa: Frankreich, Italien, Großbritannien*, Reinbek 1971.

G. **Arrighi**, 'Der Klassenkampf in Westeuropa im 20. Jahrhundert', F. Fröbel, J. Heinrichs, O. Kreye (eds.), *Krisen in der kapitalistischen Weltökonomie*, Reinbek 1981, 53–75.

V.M. **Bader**, *Die Wiederentdeckung der Klassen*, Hamburg 1998.

J. **Bergmann** et al., 'Herrschaft, Klassenverhältnis und Schichtung', Th.W. Adorno (ed.), *Spätkapitalismus oder Industriegesellschaft? Verhandlungen des 16. Deutschen Soziologentags 1968*, Stuttgart 1969, 67–87.

J. **Bischoff** et al. (eds.), *Klassen und soziale Bewegungen*, Hamburg 2003.

P. **Bourdieu**, *Leçon sur la leçon*, Paris 1982.

P. **Bourdieu**, 'Political Representation: Elements for a Theory of the Political Field', J.B. Thompson (ed.), *Language and Symbolic Power*, transl. M. Adamson, Cambridge 1991.

P. **Bourdieu**, *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action*, Stanford 1998.

R. **Brenner**, 'Structure vs Conjucture. The 2006 Elections and the Rightward Shift', *New Left Review* 43 Jan/Feb 2007, 33–59.

R. **Castel**, *From Manual Workers to Wage Laborers: Transformation of the Social Question*, transl. and ed. R. Boyd, New Brunswick-London 2003.

R. **Castel**, 'Das Verschwimmen der sozialen Klassen', Bischoff et al. 2003, 7–17.

E. **Crome**, *Sozialismus im 21. Jahrhundert*, Berlin 2006.

F. **Deppe**, 'Arbeiterklasse und Arbeiterbewegung im 21. Jahrhundert', W. Hecker, J. Klein, H.K. Rupp (eds.), *Politik und Wissenschaft in Marburg*, vol. 2, Münster 2003, 121–56.

F. **Deppe** et al., *Der neue Imperialismus*, Heilbronn 2004.

F.Rh. **Dulles** (1949), *Labor in America: A History*, New York 1956 (1968).

K. **Farner**, Th. **Pinkus**, *Der Weg des Sozialismus: Quellen und Dokumente 1891–1962*, Reinbek 1964.

M. **Feuersenger** (ed.), *Gibt es noch ein Proletariat?*, Frankfurt/M 1962.

G. **Friedrichs**, *Automation – Risiko und Chance: Beiträge zur 2. Internationalen Arbeitstagung der Industriegewerkschaft Metall über Rationalisierung, Automatisierung und technischen Fortschritt*, 2 vols., Frankfurt/M 1965.

F. **Fröbel**, J. **Heinrichs**, O. **Kreye**, *Umbruch in der Weltwirtschaft: Die globale Strategie: Verbilligung der Arbeitskraft, Flexibilisierung der Arbeit, neue Technologien*, Reinbek 1986.

E. **Gauthier**, 'Akteure der sozialen Transformation: Altermondialisten, Gewerkschaften und Parteien', Bischoff et al. 2003, 226–48.

Th. **Geiger**, *Die Klassengesellschaft im Schmelztiegel*, Cologne 1949.

A. **Glyn**, B. **Sutcliffe**, *British Capitalism, Workers and the Profits Squeeze*, London 1972.

D. **Harvey**, *The New Imperialism*, Oxford 2003.

W.F. **Haug**, *High-Tech-Kapitalismus: Analysen zu Produktionsweise, Arbeit, Sexualität, Krieg und Hegemonie*, Hamburg 2003.

W.F. **Haug**, 'Arbeit im High-Tech-Kapitalismus', *Argument* 256, 46 (2004), 357–67.

R. **Heilbroner**, *Twenty-First Century Capitalism*, New York 1993.

G. **Hillmann**, *Die Befreiung der Arbeit: Die Entwicklung kooperativer Selbstorganisation und die Auflösung bürokratisch-hierarchischer Herrschaft*, Reinbek 1970.

J. **Hirsch**, 'Internationale Regulation: Bedingungen von Dominanz, Abhängigkeit und Entwicklung im globalen Kapitalismus', *Argument* 198, 35 (1993), 195–222.

O. **Kirchheimer**, 'Weimar – and What Then? An Analysis of a Constitution', F.S. Burin, K.L. Shell (eds.), *Politics, Law and Social Change: Selected Essays of Otto Kirchheimer*, New York 1969.

A. **Lipietz**, *Mirages and Miracles: The Crisis of Global Fordism*, London 1987.

J. **Lojkine**, 'Neue Klassenverhältnisse, neue soziale Bewegungen und Alternativen zum Kapitalismus', Bischoff et al. 2003, 43–62.

B. **Lutz**, *Der kurze Traum immerwährender Prosperität*, Frankfurt/M 1984.

S. **Mallet**, *The New Working Class*, Nottingham 1975.

E. **Mandel**, *Long Waves of Capitalist Development: A Marxist Interpretation, based on the Marshall Lectures Given at the University of Cambridge*, London 1995 (Cambridge 1978).

C. Wright **Mills**, *White Collar: The American Middle Classes*, Oxford-New York 1969.

J. **Mooser**, *Arbeiterleben in Deutschland 1900–1970*, Frankfurt/M 1984.

T. **Moulián**, *Socialismo del siglo XXI: La quinta vía*, Santiago (Chile) 2000 (*Ein Sozialismus für das 21. Jahrhundert: der fünfte Weg*, Zurich 2000).

E. **Nolte**, 'Weltbürgerkrieg 1917–1989?', E. Jesse (ed.), *Totalitarismus im 20. Jahrhundert*, Baden-Baden 1996, 357–69.

R. **Opitz**, *Europastrategien des deutschen Kapitals 1900–1945*, Cologne 1977.

L. **Panitch**, C. **Leys** (eds.), *Working Classes, Global Realities – Socialist Register 2001*, London-New York.

PAQ (Projektgruppe Automation und Qualifikation), *Automation in der BRD*, Berlin/W 1975.

H. **Popitz** et al., *Das Gesellschaftsbild des Arbeiters*, Tübingen 1957.

N. **Poulantzas** (1968), *Political Power and Social Classes*, transl. T. O'Hagen, London 1978.

N. **Poulantzas**, *The Crisis of the Dictatorships: Portugal – Greece – Spain* (1974), transl. D. Fernbach, London 1975.

R. **Sennett**, *The Corrosion of Character: The Personal Consequences of Work in the New Capitalism*, New York-London 1998.

L. **von Stein**, *The History of the Social Movement in France, 1789–1850*, transl., edit. and introd. K. Mengelberg, Totowa (NJ) 1964.

H. **Steiner**, *Sozialstrukturveränderungen im modernen Kapitalismus: Zur Klassenanalyse der Angestellten in Westdeutschland*, Berlin/GDR 1967.

E.P. **Thompson**, *The Making of the English Working Class*, Harmondsworth 1963 (1968).

E. **Varga**, *Die große Krise und ihre politischen Folgen – Wirtschaft und Politik 1928–1934*, Moscow-Leningrad 1934, partial reprint in id., *Die Krise des Kapitalismus und ihre politischen Folgen*, ed. E. Altvater, Frankfurt/M-Vienna 1969.

M. **Vester** et al., *Soziale Milieus im gesellschaftlichen Strukturwandel: Zwischen Integration und Ausgrenzung* (1993), Frankfurt/M 2001.

A. **Lange-Vester**, Ch. **Teiwes-Kügler**, M. **Vester**, *Die neuen Arbeitnehmer: Zunehmende Kompetenzen – wachsende Unsicherheit*, Hamburg 2007.

I. **Wallerstein**, *The Decline of American Power: The U.S. in a Chaotic World*, New York-London 2003.

B. **Walpen**, *Die offenen Feinde und ihre Gesellschaft: Eine hegemonietheoretische Studie zur Mont Pèlerin Society*, Hamburg 2004.

D. **Yergin**, J. **Stanislaw**, *The Commanding Heights: The Battle for the World Economy* (1998), New York 2002.

III. If one takes a Cold War view of an irreconcilable antagonism between capitalism and socialism, one misses, as Eric **Hobsbawm** emphasises, 'the central hinge of twentieth-century history', the Second World War in which 'liberal capitalism and Stalinist communism found themselves making common cause against the danger of Nazi Germany'; 'the sacrifice of the USSR and the ideas of macro-economic planning and management pioneered there [...] saved liberal capitalism and helped to reconstitute it' and cushion it, 'it was the salutary fear of revolution that provided much of the incentive to do so' (1997, 315). This observation suggests how contradictorily Soviet socialism is positioned within the Cs that overlap inter-capitalist conflicts. Itself arising from Cs, Soviet power experienced confrontation on many sides from the outset: with national and international C waged by the classes that it had disempowered and expropriated within Russia, as well as by the bourgeoisie and other ruling classes worldwide; with the challenge to accept a class compromise, indeed alliance with national bourgeoisies against fascism; and with "inner-socialist" conflicts such as the Sino-Soviet split. In international C – which is how one can conceptualise "system competition" – the Soviet Union failed in a fundamental way. The question of which classes were the antagonists in the worldwide C is important in terms of future Cs.

1. Soon after the October Revolution, **Lenin** already realised that the calculations made vis-à-vis the world revolution would not work out. In view of the rejection of his call for an immediate peace agreement (26 October [8 November] 1917, CW 26/239 et sqq.) and the absence of revolutionary uprisings outside Russia, he argued in January 1918 for a separate peace with Germany, since 'the moment a socialist government triumphed in any one country, questions must be decided, not from the point of view of whether this or that imperialism is preferable, but exclusively from the point of view of the conditions which best make for the development and consolidation of the socialist revolution which has already begun' (26/445). If this was an orientation to the national C, which could be construed as defensive, then the international offensive goal followed hard on this. One had 'to "*prepare for and wage*" a revolutionary war' (446), however, 'at the *present* moment' 'we cannot set ourselves' the aim of 'a war waged by a socialist republic against the bourgeois countries, with the aim [...] of overthrowing the bourgeoisie in other countries' (449).

The attempt made to wage a "revolutionary war" against Poland, despite **Lenin**'s reservations, ended in a defeat in whose wake Soviet Russia's situation

deteriorated further. Lenin now counted on the 'peaceful attitude, not only on the part of the workers and peasants [...] but also on the part of a huge section of the reasonable bourgeoisie and the governments' (33/139), as well as on 'recognizing the *equality* of the two *property systems*' (356). This was later seen as the 'basic idea' of the concept of "peaceful coexistence" (**Schmidt/Schwarz** 1989, 45). Up to its abrogation by the 1986 CPSU programme (see **Gorbachev** 2000, 39) it was defined as "a specific form of the C".

In **Lenin**, the interpretation of international conflicts as C went along with the assessment that in Soviet Russia, 'the class of exploiters [...] has not disappeared and cannot disappear all at once under the dictatorship of the proletariat'. The exploiters 'still have an international base in the form of international capital, of which they are a branch. They still retain certain means of production in part, they still have money, they still have vast social connections' (30/115). If this insight at first had a possible basis in the real C represented by the Civil War aggravated by foreign intervention, the thesis of "C that does not disappear all at once" proved fateful in the long run. The defeat of the Kronstadt Rebellion in 1921 already raised the question of the class character of this conflict.

In 1929 **Stalin** proclaimed an 'intensification of the C' because 'in spite of the decline in their relative growth as compared with the growth of socialism, there is still taking place an absolute growth of the capitalist elements' in addition to which 'world capitalism is supporting them' (Wks 12, 37). To demonstrate this, he mingles the C concept with other political struggles domestically and abroad and overstretches them to the point of unrecognisability. This is undertaken in order to derive the 'task of intensifying the fight against Social-Democracy, and, above all, against its "Left" wing, as being the social buttress of capitalism', and furthermore, 'against the Right elements, as being the agents of Social-Democratic influence'. Finally, the above coalesce in 'the task of intensifying the fight against conciliation towards the Right deviation, as being the refuge of opportunism in the Communist Parties' (18). A direct path led from this to the Terror of the 1930s.

2. In 1956, the Twentieth Party Congress of the CPSU did not distance itself from this conception of C. Nikita **Khrushchev** stressed the positive aspect of **Lenin** against **Stalin**, maintaining that the former used 'the most extreme methods [...] only against actual class enemies' and as examples named 'the Socialist Revolutionary organizers of the anti-Soviet uprising, with the counter-revolutionary kulaks in 1918' (1962, 17). The CPSU's Central Committee adopted Stalin's view in almost identical terms: The 'intrigues of international reaction' had become 'all the more dangerous as inside the country a bitter C had long

been underway'. After **Lenin**'s death, 'the hostile tendencies within the party' had become 'more active'. Thus, the party had developed 'a merciless struggle against the enemies of Leninism', during which **Stalin** acquired 'great authority and popularity' (*Beschluss* 1956/1990, 95, 97).

The concept of the 'intensification of C in socialism' was, at the time, the common property of "actually existing socialism". In 1955 **Mao** Zedong predicted that in the coming 'fifteen-year period, the C at home and abroad will be very tense. […] In the internal C […] one, we have fought idealism, two, we have suppressed the counter-revolutionaries, three, we have settled the question about grain, and four, we have tackled the question of agricultural cooperation'. All of this was 'in the nature of a struggle against the bourgeoisie' (SW 5, 215).

If, in retrospect, the Twentieth Party Congress kept to **Stalin**'s concept of C, it nevertheless changed its tone with respect to the future. One now found oneself in a 'new stage' in which people had 'united even more tightly around the CP'. The 'camp of the enemy of the working class' was now located above all abroad, but now the focus was on 'peaceful coexistence' and the search for 'possibilities of preventing wars' (*Beschluss*, 87 et sq.). The Communist Party of China saw 'revisionism' in these changes and made its adherence to the concept of the 'intensification of C' into a weapon in the battle for the leading role of the "world communist movement". The 'question of C', it insisted, retained its relevance as the question of the 'struggle between the proletariat and bourgeoisie […], between Marxism and […] anti-Marxism-Leninism' as well as between Marxism-Leninism and revisionism (**Mao** 1962/1974, 151, 153). The "Cultural Revolution" of 1966–69 was understood according to this sense as C.

In the GDR, after the suppression of the 17 June 1953 uprising, Walter **Ulbricht** considered it certain 'that in the future the C of the exploiters against the working people […] will be further intensified' (1953, 68). In 1968, in the style of the Soviet notions of "consolidation of people around the CP", the concept of the 'socialist community of humans' was proclaimed in the GDR. The working class was to form the 'core' of this community, the 'centre of the alliance with farmers and other non-monopolistic classes and strata' (**Hümmler** 1969, 11). Instead of "C in socialism" the talk was that now 'diverse human relationships [are developing] between the classes and strata of the working population […] on the basis of new forms of close economic cooperation' (14). The persisting element was the 'dictatorship of the proletariat as the highest form of democracy' (11). In 1971, the 'unity of economic and social policy' was elevated to the status of a strategy and established as the 'main arena of struggle for the party' (**Reinhold** 1987, 15), whereby the classes and strata were seen as connected by 'concording

basic interests' (**Hümmler**/**Leonhardt** 1987, 51). In terms of the practical exercise of the "dictatorship of the proletariat", understood as the suppression of opposition, nothing changed.

The common feature of all these conceptions was that in place of concrete class analysis, arbitrary definitions of the class concept were put forward, and thus also of C, subsuming a series of heterogeneous conflicts to "C" without further analysis.

3. But what kind of C actually took place within command socialism? Which classes stood in opposition to each other? In Yugoslavia, Milovan **Djilas** provided a key for understanding this with his concept of the 'new class' consisting of the 'political bureaucracy', which in its germ form was already the 'party of the Bolshevik type', or more precisely, 'in that stratum of professional revolutionaries who made up its core even before it attained power' (1957, 39). Fritz **Behrens** sees "actually existing socialism" as 'class society' in which 'the ruling bureaucracy and the ruled producers' form 'the two fundamental classes', and thus, the working class and farmers remain the oppressed classes. He understands 'the Cs [...] from the Kronstadt Rebellion in 1921 through the 17 June 1953 in the GDR and the Prague Spring to the major strikes of 1970–71 in Poland [...] as uprisings of Marxism against Leninism' (1978–79/1990, 41 et sqq.). Regarding the GDR, Helmut **Bock** speaks of a 'ruling caste of state-monopoly socialism', which 'itself created no material and intellectual goods' but which 'led, regulated, controlled, patronised, distributed, and decided' (1994, 97). Regarding Russia, Eastern Europe, and East Asia, Gáspár Miklós **Tamás** holds that the 'alleged "socialist" revolutions' did 'not change class societies into classless societies, but caste societies into class societies' (2007, 12). The 'nomenklatura' established itself as the 'ruling class' (11). The ruled were now the 'new working class created by the Bolshevik tyranny through administrative-military action', a class 'that was meant *ideologically* to be a non-class[:] [...] the total and equal political community of non-possessors' (21). For Tamás, this community was subjected to 'the persistence of classic capitalist features', such as, among others, 'wage labour, the commodity economy, division of labour, imposition of work, subsumption to capital [...], repression of proletarian resistance, the suppression of working-class autonomy, [...] political and ideological oppression, [...] censorship', and 'savage exploitation'. On 'the abolition of private property', Tamás notes that '"socialist state property" is conceptually not different from "capitalist private property" [...] albeit it means a different method of social organization and social domination' (10 et sq.). That the change of course in the People's Republic of China after **Mao** could have occurred 'without the slightest change in the political "superstructure"', confirms for **Tamás**, the thesis of

a 'capitalism pure and simple': the '"totalitarian" governance by **Stalin**'s true heirs is perfectly reconcilable with the most savage version of free-market capitalism' – thus with continued C, which takes on new forms between the classes having arisen in "actually existing socialism". However, this conclusion ignores specifics of historical form and formation.

4. With all this, it is incontestable that there was an international C in the 20th cent. called "system competition", whose effects were different in different regions of the world and which will continue to be so. Its effect on the worldwide anti-imperialist, anti-colonial liberation struggles and revolutions in the 1920s and after the Second World War up through the 1960s is undisputed. Frantz **Fanon** went on record as saying: 'This competition gives an almost universal dimension to even the most localized demands' (1963, 75). Thus this 'antagonism of the two "worlds"', derived from the C 'of imperialist capitalism and developing socialism, set free a *Third World*' (**Haug** 1979/1987, 202). **Hobsbawm** expressed the result of this dialectic of the international C with the formula of the 'terrible paradox [...] that the **Stalin** experienced by the Soviet people and the Stalin seen as a liberating force outside were the same. And he was the liberator for the ones at least in part because he was the tyrant for the others' (1997, 333). In the GDR the victory of the SU brought a 'revolution "from above"' (**Bock** 1994, 74), which was an answer to the fact that in 1933 the German labour movement had lost the C against the classes that were ready for a fascist dictatorship. The SU's state class and "new working class" had, according to Bock, through huge sacrifices proven themselves capable of compensating for this defeat, and also, of entering into a class compromise with the bourgeoisie of the Western powers which this victory required.

In the "Cold War", the progressive role of the "new class" continually declined in importance. Already in their 1965 diagnosis, Jacek **Kuroń** and Karol **Modzelewski** showed that this role had 'acted as a brake on the development of the colonial revolution [...] and the struggle of the working class in the economically developed capitalist countries'. On the other hand, where the colonial revolution escaped its control – 'let us only mention Cuba and Algeria' – as well as with the 'first anti-bureaucratic revolutions in Poland and Hungary [...] the end of this custodianship began to be prepared' (1967, 43 et sq.). – The historical end of this custodianship has once again, through its subsequent repercussions on "the wretched of the earth", brought this custodianship's ambiguity to light.

Wolfram Adolphi
All parts of the article translated by Eric Canepa

Bibliography

F. **Behrens**, 'Der real existierende Sozialismus (Teil 2)' (1978–79), *UTOPIE kreativ*, vol. I (1990), no. 3, 39–44 (Part 1 in 1,2, 85–89).

F. **Behrens**, 'Beschluss des ZK der KPdSU über die Überwindung des Personenkults und seiner Folgen' (30 June 1956), *Die Geheimrede Chruschtschows*, Berlin/GDR 1990, 86–113.

H. **Bock**, 'Partei – Staat – bürokratische Kaste: Zu einigen struktur-analytischen Aspekten bezüglich des staatsmonopolistischen Sozialismus in der DDR', D. Keller, H. Modrow, H. Wolf (eds.), *Ansichten zur Geschichte der DDR*, vol. 3, Bonn-Berlin 1994, 71–110.

N.S. **Khrushchev**, 'Crimes of the Stalin Era: Special Report to the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union – Closed session. February 24–25, 1956', *The New Leader*, 1962, 7–65.

M. **Djilas**, *The New Class: An Analysis of the Communist System*, London 1957.

F. **Fanon**, *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), transl. C. Farrington, preface by J.-P. Sartre, New York 1963.

M.S. **Gorbachev**, *On My Country and the World*, transl. G. Shriver, New York 2000.

W.F. **Haug**, 'Marxismus, Dritte Welt und das Problem des Eurozentrismus' (1979), *Pluraler Marxismus*, vol. 2, Berlin/W 1987, 197–227.

E.J. **Hobsbawm**, *On History*, London 1997.

H. **Hümmler**, 'Auf dem Weg zur sozialistischen Menschengemeinschaft', H. Gambke et al. (eds.), *Auf dem Weg zur sozialistischen Menschengemeinschaft*, Berlin/GDR 1969, 9–40.

H. **Hümmler**, R.**Leonhardt**, 'Die sozialistische Demokratie – ihre Vorzüge und ihre Überlegenheit', *Sozialismus in der DDR: Gesellschaftsstrategie mit dem Blick auf das Jahr 2000*, Berlin/GDR 1987, 44–59.

J. **Kuroń**, K. **Modzelewski**, *A Revolutionary Socialist Manifesto – Written in a Polish Prison: An Open Letter to the Party* (1967), London 1969.

Mao Zedong, 'Fortgesetzter Klassenkampf oder Revisionismus: Chruschtschow und Chinas innerparteiliche Opposition' (1962), H. Martin (ed.), *Mao intern – Unveröffentlichte Schriften, Reden und Gespräche Mao Tse-tungs 1949–1971*, Munich 1974, 150–57.

O. **Reinhold**, 'Erfolgreiche Gesellschaftsstrategie der SED', H. Gambke (ed.), *Sozialismus in der DDR: Gesellschaftsstrategie mit dem Blick auf das Jahr 2000*, Berlin/GDR 1987, 7–23.

M. **Schmidt**, W. **Schwarz**, 'Umfassende internationale Sicherheit – Erfordernis unserer Zeit', M. Schmidt et al. (eds.), *Sicherheit und friedliche Koexistenz: umfassende internationale Sicherheit, Umsetzung friedlicher Koexistenzbeziehungen heute*, Berlin/GDR 1989, 10–62.

G.M. **Tamás**, 'Ein ganz normaler Kapitalismus', *Grundrisse* 22, 6 (2007), 9–23 (English original 'Capitalism Pure and Simple' online at grundrisse.net).

W. **Ulbricht**, 'Die gegenwärtige Lage und der neue Kurs der Partei', *Der neue Kurs und die Aufgaben der Partei: 15. Tagung d. Zentralkomitees d. Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Deutschlands v. 24. bis 26. Juli 1953. Entschliessung. Referate der Genossen Otto Grotewohl u. Walter Ulbricht*, Berlin/GDR 1953, 59–102.

→ Antagonism, anti-colonialism, automation, balance of power, bourgeoisie, Chartism, capital, capitalism, class in itself/for itself, class analysis, class rule, class compromise, command-administrative system, communism, conservatism, corporatism, counterculture, counter-revolution, democracy, dictatorship of the proletariat, division of labour, domination, economism, economic policy, education, epoch, Eurocommunism, exploitation, fascism, finance capital, flexibilisation, Fordism, Frankism, general strike, globalisation, habitus, hegemony, historical mission of the working class, historical compromise, ideology, imperialism, impoverishment, individual, industrial reserve army, international division of labour, income, insurrection, justice, labour, late capitalism, Maoism, mass movement, mass strike, military dictatorship, middle classes, neocolonialism, neoliberalism, oppression, peace movement, peasant movement, parliamentarism, parties, peripheral capitalism, periphery/centre, political class, post-Fordism, post-industrialism, poverty/wealth, Prague Spring, property, private property, productive forces, proletariat, real socialism, reformism, relations of production, revisionism, revolution, ruling class, segmentation of the working class, socialism, solidarity, state, Stalinism, strike, surplus product, technological progress, transformation, third world, wages, war of position/movement, world revolution, working class, unemployment, united front, vanguard, violence

→ Antagonismus, Antikolonialismus, Arbeit, Arbeiterklasse, Arbeitslosigkeit, Arbeitsteilung, Armut/Reichtum, Aufstand, Ausbeutung, Automation, Avantgarde, Bauernbewegung, befehlsadministratives System, Bildung, Bourgeoisie, Chartismus, Demokratie, Diktatur des Proletariats, Dritte Welt, Eigentum, Einheitsfront, Einkommen, Epoche, Eurokommunismus, Faschismus, Finanzkapital, Flexibilisierung, Fordismus, Frankismus, Friedensbewegung, Gegenkultur, Generalstreik, Gerechtigkeit, Gewalt, Globalisierung, Habitus, Hegemonie, Herrschaft, herrschende Klasse, historische Mission der Arbeiterklasse, historischer Kompromiss, Ideologietheorie, Imperialismus, Individuum, industrielle Reservearmee, internationale Arbeitsteilung, Kapital, Kapitalismus, Klasse an sich/für sich, Klassenanalyse, Klassenherrschaft, Klassenkompromiss, Kom-

munismus, Konservatismus, Konterrevolution, Korporatismus, Kräfteverhältnis, Lohnarbeit, Maoismus, Massenbewegung, Massenstreik, Mehrprodukt, Militärdiktatur, Mittelschichten, Neokolonialismus, Neoliberalismus, Ökonomismus, Parlamentarismus, Parteien, peripherer Kapitalismus, Peripherie/Zentrum, politische Klasse, Postfordismus, Postindustrialismus, Prager Frühling, Privateigentum, Produktionsverhältnisse, Produktivkräfte, Proletariat, Realer Sozialismus, Reformismus, Revisionismus, Revolution, Segmentierung der Arbeiterklasse, Solidarität, Sozialismus, Spätkapitalismus, Staat, Stalinismus, Stellungskrieg/Bewegungskrieg, Streik, technischer Fortschritt, Transformation, Unterdrückung, Verelendung, Weltrevolution, Wirtschaftspolitik

CHAPTER 5

Climate Politics

A: siyāsa manāḫīya. – F: politique du climat. – G: Klimapolitik. – R: klimatičeskaja politika. – S: política climática. – C: qìhòu zhèngzhì 气候政治

At the beginning of the 21st cent., anthropogenic climate change is considered to be one of the central global environmental problems. It became the subject of heterogeneous CPs that intervene at the local to international level, are negotiated by a multitude of actors, and are fiercely contested, even within the Marxist-oriented left. Since the principal contributors to climate change, and those mostly affected by it, are not the same – this applies from the individual to the nation state level – there are controversies over the fair distribution of burdens. Conflicts over governmental intervention also arise due to the collision of CP with policy making fields such as economics, energy, transportation, and development, which are also the expression of the different interests of capital fractions. CP as a social interaction with the climate is not an invention of the late 20th cent. The current third phase of CP, triggered by unintended global climate change, is preceded by at least two phases, the characteristic feature of the first phase being adaptation to climate and the second being intended climate change. CP thus go back to antiquity in partly different, partly very similar forms, since later phases always contain elements of earlier CP.

1. Adaptation to a given climate as well as to climate change, which is vital for production and reproduction, already takes place in hunter-gatherer cultures. It ranges from fur clothing and protection through housing to migration and settlement in new areas as the ultimate "option of adaptation". The emergence of agriculture in the course of the 'Neolithic revolution' (**Childe** 1936/1951, 59) suggested new forms of social adaptation to climatic conditions in some warm but arid regions. **Engels** sees this as a reason for the emergence of the state (to Marx, 6 June 1853; MECW 39/339 [28/259]). Following him, in the newspaper article *The British Rule in India*, **Marx** formulates: in the Orient '[t]his prime necessity of an economical and common use of water [...] necessitated [...] the interference of the centralizing power of Government' (MECW 12/127 [9/129]). In the *Grundrisse* (1857/58), he develops this line of thought into the theory of the 'Asiatic mode of production', in which the genesis of state and ideology is based on the mastery of, above all, climatic conditions of production: '[t]he communal conditions for real appropriation through labour, such as *irrigation*

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_006
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

systems (very important among the Asian peoples)', appear 'as the work of the higher unity – the despotic government poised above the lesser communities' (MECW 28/401 [42/386]).

Karl August **Wittfogel** (1931) – lacking knowledge of *Grundrisse*, which were first published in full in 1939–41 – argues analogously in his studies on China that there the 'regulation of water', and indeed for both artificial irrigation and flood control, required for its implementation 'large-scale forms of labour' that went far 'beyond the scope of local and communal capacity' and thus required the 'state as an overarching organ' (410). He later systematises these considerations into a 'theory of Oriental society' (1938), calling 'the state corresponding to this society Oriental absolutism or, to denote the supremacy and implacability of the type of state, Oriental despotism' (102). These early hydraulic engineering states were always exposed to the danger of 'flood and drought catastrophes on a grand scale', which drove their populations 'to mass exodus and to revolts', in which the 'subjective factor of good or bad government', i.e., 'developing or letting the hydraulic engineering decay', played a particularly important role (109). Wittfogel considers Oriental despotism to be the classic type of a 'stationary society' that did not evolve because 'the state order centred around "public works" did not enable townspeople and peasants to advance into a new social order' (118). The authoritarian hydraulic engineering and resource policies of the "Oriental societies", which include Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, and China as well as states outside the Orient such as ancient Peru, are the first CP in the proper sense – here as an adaptation to a given climate – and one of the first forms of state politics ever. According to Wittfogel, it is closely linked to the formation of a specialised bureaucracy, which monopolises the necessary hydraulic engineering, astronomical and economic planning knowledge (cf. 97 et sq.) and thus, as can be said in terms of ideology theory, socially anchors 'competence/incompetence structures' (**Haug** 1993, 50 *et passim*). In this first phase of CP, the differentiation of the state apparatus and class structure goes hand in hand with a strong development of forces of production.

Whereas **Wittfogel** assumes that the climate in the period under consideration remained largely unchanged, Nick **Brooks** (2006) sees the emergence of the first states – in the sense of 'complex, highly organised societies exhibiting a high degree of urbanisation, social stratification, division of labour, and centralisation of power' (30) – as 'a form of adaptation to climate change' (46). He refers to palaeoclimatic research, according to which, above all, reduced solar insolation has weakened the global monsoon system and, in particular, since about 4000 B.C. has led to strongly increasing aridity in the – until then still relatively "green" – present-day desert belt of the earth. Archaeological findings indicate that the first states were founded relatively simultan-

eously in these climatic regions soon afterwards (e.g. Egypt, Mesopotamia, Indus river valley). Contrary to the widely held view, the 'process of increasing "social complexity"' was here accompanied by deteriorating environmental conditions (29 et sq.) – without thereby implying 'environmental determinism' (30) – and was associated with 'increased inequality and violent conflict' (46).

2. Not only acclimation to the climate, but also the effort to change it, dates far back in history. **Empedocles** is said to have erected wind barriers to save the crops (**Diogenes Laertius**, Book 8, ch. 60) and to have merged rivers to reduce the danger of pestilence due to 'the foul smell' (ch. 70). In addition to these local interventions, he is credited with formulating a utopian climate programme, which he addresses to his students in the didactic poem *On Nature*: 'You will halt the force of tireless winds that sweep over the earth, / Devastating the cornfields with their gusts; / And in turn, if you wish, you will bring on requiting winds. / The dark rain you will transform into a drought favorable to men; / And the dry heat of summer you will transform / Into precipitations that nourish the trees, and they will abide in the sky' (ch. 59; cf. **Empedocles** 2001, 15/111, 218).

In early modern times, a second phase of CP began with efforts to spur intended regional climate changes. The first attempts were made in the North American colonies, where changes in the environment since the 17th cent. were more noticeable than in Europe due to rapid and large-scale settlement. In 1771, the North American politician Hugh **Williamson** noted regional climate changes due to deforestation and the draining of swamps and euphorically described the positive consequences for agriculture and human health through this climatic 'improvement of the colonies' (as cit. in Schramm 1984, 62 et sq.). This "power over climate" may, moreover, have fostered North American self-confidence and notions of independence (58). During the War of Independence, Benjamin **Franklin** even proposed climate modification as a weapon of war: A redirection of the Gulf Stream would bring Great Britain to its knees due to the cooling that would then occur there (**Ponte** 1976, 137).

State planning of weather and climate changes for civil and military purposes reached its peak in the 20th cent., especially since the understanding of weather and climate increased dramatically in the 1950s due to numerical computer simulations of the atmosphere; these activities were initially mainly limited to the two superpowers SU and USA. A wetter south, a warmer north and an ice-free Arctic were the main climatic desires of the SU, which wanted to promote agriculture, shipping, and raw material development, or even make them possible in the first place. Unwavering optimism about the mastery of

nature led to the planning of numerous large-scale projects; probably the most prominent was the **Davydov** plan ('**Stalin**'s Great Plan for the Transformation of Nature'), presented in 1950, which envisaged diverting Siberian rivers to the south, thus making the arid regions around the Aral Sea and the Caspian Sea arable. There were also plans to close the Bering Strait or to use aircrafts to spread dust over large areas of Arctic ice in order to melt it for good. These large-scale projects would have had incalculable consequences for the world's climate, but they all remained stuck in the planning phase or at least unfinished. However, the gigantic river diversion projects were only discontinued in 1986 under Mikhail **Gorbachev**, in the context of the new thinking on human-nature relations that emerged from perestroika (**Haug** 1989, 95). Only smaller local projects were realised, such as rain generation by cloud seeding and glacier melting by dust covering (**Ponte** 1976, 131–36). In the USA, the state has been funding extensive experiments since the 1940s on rain generation (e.g. Project Skywater), hail suppression, and tornado and hurricane control (e.g. Project Cirrus, Project Stormfury).

In view of the risks of this development, Edith **Brown Weiss** pointed out in 1975 that 'the new technology of weather and climate modification [...] will demand new responses from the international community' (805), especially since more than 60 states had already experimented with it in the mid-1970s. The imminent 'politicization of the global climate system' (ibid.) requires, above all, the regulation of liability issues and compensation for damages, of necessary 'climate technology transfer' to developing countries, the general preservation of the climate system as a global common good, and a strict ban on weather and climate weapons. Paradigmatic were lawsuits filed by Honduras against the USA for hurricane modifications under Project Stormfury: On the one hand, the USA was officially accused of "rain theft" in 1973 for allowing clouds to rain down while still in the Gulf of Mexico, allegedly causing a drought in Honduras. On the other hand, Hurricane FiFi, which caused severe damage in Honduras in 1974, was allegedly diverted from its original course towards the USA and redirected to Honduras (**Ponte** 1976, 149 et sqq.). Direct "climate aid" to assist developing countries was also discussed: During the drought of the late 1960s, some Sahel countries requested "cloud seeding aid" from the US military: It refused, saying that after all 'private American "cloud-seeders" could be hired for the job' (166), and denied any "climate technology transfer". A ban on weather and climate weapons became more and more urgent after it became known that the USA were probably the first state to use them in the Vietnam War between 1967 and 1972: The US military increased precipitation in certain areas in order to paralyse enemy supply routes through mud formation (164 et sq.).

The struggles to prevent nuclear tests and nuclear wars since the 1950s have also always had a dimension related to CP, since, in view of the danger of a nuclear winter, the protection of the world's climate was also at stake. In order to ban weather and climate weapons, the UN Convention on the 'Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Uses of Environmental Modification Techniques' was adopted in 1977. However, its operationalisation wrestles with the problem of distinguishing between civilian and military intentions on the one hand, and between natural and modified weather or climate on the other. Moreover, the convention only prohibits military use, not corresponding research, and thus legalises further development of weather and climate weapons; for example, a US military-funded study subtitled 'Owning the weather in 2025' (**House** et al. 1996) examines temporary modifications of precipitation, fog, storms, and the ionosphere during military operations. In the context of "climate warfare", the civil-military High Frequency Active Auroral Research Program (HAARP), launched by the USA in 1993, is also discussed. It uses high-frequency electromagnetic waves to study, but also manipulate, the upper atmosphere and is therefore criticised, among other things, as a climate-altering weapons system.

3. In the course of the 1970s, progress-optimistic efforts at intended climate modifications were increasingly eclipsed by discussions of possible unintended global anthropogenic climate change. This heralded a reconfiguration and third phase of CP. Although scientific discussions on global climate change due to the burning of fossil fuels date back to the 19th cent. (cf. **Sardemann** 1997, 28 et sq.; **Weart** 2003, 1–8), it was not until the 1970s – promoted by the emerging ecological awareness and the environmental movement – that it was perceived as a potential threat. Initially, it was disputed whether warming due to greenhouse gases and direct release of thermal energy or cooling due to aerosols predominated, and which trend was to be expected in the long term. Soon afterwards, however, aerosol emissions were reduced in many places in order to counteract regional environmental problems due to "acid rain", among other things.

The Marxist debate on climate, as with general environmental issues, was initially hesitant and tended to be defensive. The environmental question stood in the context of the debate on the "Limits to Growth" and was subject to the suspicion of ideology, since it distracted from distribution issues and class struggle in capitalist states and served the profit interests of an emerging 'eco-industrial complex' (cf. **Enzensberger** 1973, 10). Moreover, the idea dominated that, if there were any environmental problems worth mentioning at all, they were an expression of a "secondary contradiction" and that their solution was linked to the necessary and at the same time sufficient condition of the trans-

ition to socialism. Under state socialism, environmental problems were marginalised, not least because of the economically strained situation within the context of international competition (cf. **Methe** 1981, 283, 407), although in the GDR, for example, some practices such as the promotion of regional economic cycles and local public transport were certainly environmentally friendly.

However, there were Marxist contributions that took the topic seriously at an early stage. From the GDR climatology, a systematic study of human activities' impact on the climate is available. It points out the 'high degree of sensitivity of the present global climate regime' (**Bernhardt/Kortüm** 1976, 47) and the international responsibility in this respect. Wolfgang **Harich** warns of the 'monstrous consequences' resulting 'from the changes in the climate brought about by economic growth' (1975, 119); they form a lodestone in the justification of his call for a 'communism without growth'. Ulrich **Hampicke** sees increasing 'energy change of humankind' (1975, 795) as the main reason for the objective limits to growth since this leads to 'unwanted and unpredictable climate modifications' (806). However, he rejects a 'mechanistic self-destruction theory of capitalism' due to prior 'collision between ecological restrictions and systemic-required expansion', since prior 'repercussions on political practice' would prevent this (796).

After the First World Climate conference in Geneva in 1979, at the latest, when the warming thesis had largely been accepted, the 'politicisation of the greenhouse issue' began in the mid-1980s. By then, it had been brought to the attention of a broad public in most industrialised countries and come onto the agenda of international politics (**Missbach** 1999, 132). This process led to the adoption of the United Nations *Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC) in 1992 at the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, with the long-term objective of the 'stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system' (Art. 2). The fundamental options for action set out in the *Convention*, which are complementary, are climate protection, i.e. reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and adaptation to climate change. On the basis of the UNFCCC, the *Kyoto Protocol* came into force in 2005 as the first binding international agreement to climate protection – modelled on the *Montreal Protocol* in order to protect the ozone layer. The agreement was adopted in 1987 during the period of bloc confrontation – after seven years of a tough ratification process. It obliges all industrialised countries to reduce their annual emissions of six greenhouse gases – including carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and various fluorinated hydrocarbons, weighted according to their greenhouse effect and totalled up – by an average of 5.2% by 2008–12 compared to 1990 (the Kyoto targets

for individual countries vary between –8% and +10% and were later further differentiated within the EU). Although each country is free to decide how to achieve its reduction target, three so-called flexible mechanisms are to be used globally: Emissions Trading, Joint Implementation (JI) and the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), with the latter two enabling industrialised countries to receive credit for reductions in other industrialised countries (JI) or in developing and newly industrialising countries (CDM). The flexible mechanisms with their "division of the atmosphere" into emission rights as an internationally tradable fictitious commodity – a further stage in the long history of the enclosure of the commons and their transformation into commodities, from pasture land to water to genetic material (**Buck** 2006, 68 et sq.) – are based on the neoliberal credo that the market automatically regulates, so that reductions are made where it is cheapest. In this context the idea of tradable pollution rights was also invoked – after it had first been systematically investigated and propagated by the Canadian economist John **Dales** in 1968 – and had already been successfully implemented in the USA within the framework of the Clean Air Act (1990) in the form of nitrogen dioxide emission rights for the reduction of air pollution (cf. **Erion** 2005, 90). However, the free trade rhetoric regarding emissions trading belies the fact that its successful functioning requires strong political regulation, the mode of which is hotly disputed: i.e. the sufficient restriction of the initial allocation of allowance certificates.

The debate regarding adaptation, on the other hand, only gained importance at the end of the 1990s, partly because people gradually became aware that further unavoidable climate change was to be expected even if effective climate protection was implemented immediately. A first step was taken in 2001 with the establishment of the three so-called Marrakech Funds for financing adaptation in developing countries, although two of these rely on voluntary payments by donor countries and only one is binding under international law (cf. **Dietz** 2006, 38). At the beginning of the 21st cent., the international agreements are being taken seriously insofar as governmental CPs are now being implemented worldwide with a spectrum of instruments ranging from regulatory emission limits, eco-taxes, and subsidies for renewable energies to the anchoring of climate protection and adaptation in municipal planning.

However, climate change is a 'terrain of conflict in which the interpretation of the problem and the "correct" roadmap for solving the problem are fought over' (**Brunnengräber** 2002, 195). On the one hand, the causes of anthropogenic climate change are deeply embedded in the mode of production and consumption of the industrialised countries; on the other hand, the consequences are unevenly distributed globally and stalled. They cannot be predicted exactly

and, moreover, are assessed differently by different actors. Conflicts arise between state, capital, and society on a national and international level, e.g. between states in the international climate negotiations, between governmental policy fields, between different fractions of capital, and not least between and within the left and Marxist movements. A basic problem is that the polluters are often not the main victims, which raises questions of justice in at least three respects. First, there is the question of intergenerational justice, since today's emissions will only produce their full climate consequences in the future. Second, questions of North-South justice arise, as more than 80 % of historical greenhouse gas emissions have been caused by the North, while the South faces more severe climate impacts and has less potential to adapt. Third, sharing the burden of climate change mitigation and the vulnerability to climate change depends on intra-societal distributional and power asymmetries, which may be further exacerbated by climate change – and climate policies. Thus, each hurricane relentlessly reveals the class specificity of vulnerability. Melanie **Weber** (2005) discusses questions relating to gender justice using natural resource use in developing countries as an example. In this context, the concept of 'climate justice', which is gaining popularity, could be further specified and made fruitful (for a discussion of some approaches, see **Dorsey** 2007).

3.1 *Positions on the international climate negotiations.* – Before withdrawing from the Kyoto Protocol in 2001, the USA, together with the other so-called JUSCANZ states (including Japan, Canada, and Australia), always demanded the unlimited applicability of flexible mechanisms and accountability to lower carbon so that they could reduce as little as possible within their own countries. They also demanded emission limits for the South as well, while remaining hesitant about technology transfer and financial assistance in this regard. The EU demands the strongest benchmarks for reduction, a minimum share of reductions in its own country and regards itself as accommodating towards the South. The OPEC states have a fundamental interest in oil consumption, but pursue quite different investment strategies (cf. **Massarrat** 2000, 139–51). The part of the South that is poorer in fossil resources agrees that development must have priority over reduction commitments, that a solidarity-based and patent-free transfer of low-emission technologies would reduce the fear of climate protection-induced increases in expenditure on energy imports, and that adaptation assistance and compensation payments for climate impacts are necessary (this applies dramatically to the AOSIS group of some 40 small island states such as the threatened Maldives or Tuvalu); however, this part is not monolithic either.

The diverging positions of the EU and the USA often give rise to the construction of a good-evil dualism, but behind this lies a series of substantial differences. On the one hand, the USA, in contrast to the EU, has an immense wealth of oil and coal, which, together with the great expandable distances within the USA, has contributed to it becoming the 'motherland of fossilistic Fordism' (**Missbach** 1999, 252). At the beginning of the 21st cent., per capita emissions in the USA are more than twice as high as in the EU, which has a more efficient energy system and more experience with renewable energies. On the other hand, for a long time the USA feared fewer direct climate impacts (e.g. beneficial effects are even predicted for agriculture), and the indirect climate impacts (e.g. climate refugees from the South) also seemed to be more serious for the EU (cf. **Lipietz** 2000, 111 et sq.).

3.2 *Criticism of the Kyoto Protocol* – Two fundamental objections are that the targeted reductions are far too low, and that it remains completely open how things will continue after 2012. Crediting reduction (e.g. forests, arable land) is problematic because the carbon stored in vegetation can neither be reliably quantified nor permanently sequestered and only serves to opportunistically delay "real" emission reductions (cf. **Brunnengräber** 2002, 204 et sq.). Developing countries are not included, although they are 'forced' by the institutions of development aid 'to industrialise, and consequently, all things being equal, to increase greenhouse gas emissions' (**Altvater** 2005, 173). At the same time, the percentage reduction per country (the "grandfathering principle") means that 'historical inequalities' are accepted, which for 'developing countries such as China or India would amount to a verdict of underdevelopment' (**Leff** 2002, 102) as soon as they were included under this condition. The CDM is criticised as an instrument of "carbon colonialism" because it shifts the solution of the climate problem to the South, while the mode of production and consumption in the industrialised countries remains untouched; in particular, the use of the South as a "carbon dumping ground" through sink projects represents a 'form of modern sale of indulgences' (**Brunnengräber** 2002, 201) and a perpetuation of the 'mechanism of unequal exchange' (**Leff** 2002, 100). Megan **Lindow** (2005) uses the example of South Africa to argue that the CDM can even lead to increases in emissions, as 'perverse incentives are created for countries and industries [in the South] to continue emitting in order to attract investment capital [from the North]' (58). In addition, CDM projects can have ecologically and socially questionable consequences; particularly controversial are afforestation projects aimed at monocultures (e.g. the Plantar project in Brazil), which cause ecological problems and displace indigenous forms of use, and landfill gas projects (e.g. in Durban, South Africa), which turn unhealthy landfills in

poor urban districts into a financial bonanza (**Erion** 2005, 97). In addition to such conceptual criticism, Heidi **Bachram** (2004) points to problems of implementation, since insufficient control of emissions trading, JI, and CDM leads to 'climate fraud': Often the certification of emissions and reductions is carried out by consulting firms instead of independent institutions (8).

3.3 *Basic problem analyses and forming solutions*. – Eco-cultural pessimist positions hold industrialisation and rising consumption par excellence responsible for anthropogenic climate change and consider it inevitable. Classical environmental economics describes climate change as 'the greatest market failure the world has ever experienced' (**Stern** 2006, viii), and consequently believes that it can be remedied by internalising external effects. Marxist-oriented analyses, on the other hand, focus on the capitalist mode of production and consumption as the cause.

For John Bellamy **Foster** (2002), the climate problem manifests the irresolvable 'conflict between ecology and capitalism' (12): The imperatives of capitalist accumulation, which are geared to short-term profit, make long-term efforts to protect the climate largely impossible, so that 'capitalism is unable to reverse course' (21). Although a supposed '"decoupling"' of 'economic growth from the use of energy and material' has been achieved due to 'increased energy efficiency and the growth of the New Economy' with regard to easily substitutable or precipitable resources and pollutants, carbon dioxide emissions have steadily increased in leading industrial countries since the 1970s – with few exceptions, such as Germany, where, among other things, numerous emission-intensive, lignite-fired power plants were shut down as a result of the accession of the GDR (22 et sq.). Reductions in emissions per dollar GNP along the descending branch of an "environmental Kuznets curve" (according to which there is supposed to be an inverted U-shaped relationship between specific environmental pollution and GNP) were thereby obviously overcompensated by economic growth. The 'dematerialization myth' suggests a transition to a "weightless" post-industrial society, which, however, by no means bears out (22). Against Foster's argumentation, it has to be objected that there are capitalist countries in which primary energy consumption does not increase despite economic growth (e.g. Denmark since the 1970s); the question is also open as to which still unexploited emission reduction potentials the high-tech mode of production offers.

Victor **Wallis** (2006) considers the drastic reduction of carbon emissions without a 'social transformation' to be 'totally unreal' (89) and points to the potential solutions of a socialist approach that not only 'integrates new energy sources into established patterns of consumption' but also aims to reduce

total production, for example through 'reconfiguring economic space' by taking advantage of geographic proximity (i.e. countering the tendencies of transport-intensive globalisation), promoting collective consumption and less possession and consumption-oriented lifestyles, and the cessation of military activities (88). With respect to the latter, a global empirical analysis at the country level shows that their magnitude is positively correlated with carbon dioxide emissions, partly because the military itself is a significant emitter in many countries (**Roberts** et al. 2003, 296).

James **O'Connor** (1998), in the context of his thesis of the 'second contradiction of capitalism' (158), considers global warming as a potential trigger of an underproduction crisis, as 'capitalist accumulation [is] impairing or destroying its own conditions' (166); that is, the productive forces prove to be destructive forces. The response to this crisis, he argues, requires new forms of cooperation and planning and imposes a higher degree of social control in the provision of the external natural conditions of production. This makes 'imagining more clearly a transition to socialism' possible (167), thus making a "second path to socialism" possible in addition to that resulting from the 'first contradiction' between productive forces and relations of production. The argument against this is that destruction and reconstruction, regardless of whether due to war or climate change, can stimulate capitalist accumulation; and 'if arms Keynesianism can work, climate Keynesianism certainly can' (**Radke** 2007), especially since the latter simultaneously mitigates the symptoms of the first and the second contradiction (cf. **Panayotakis** 2006, 268).

For Elmar **Altvater** (2005) the climate problem follows from the 'fossilistic capitalism' (212) that emerged in the 18th cent. with its 'historically unique "trinity" of European rationality, which takes material form in modern industry, the fossil energy sources that are its fuel, and the capitalist social formation with its dynamics stimulated by profit and competition' (72). It will not implode like state socialism, he argues; more likely is 'a social explosion, because preparations for the period after the peak of oil production and against the looming climate catastrophe are far too meek' (175). This, he argues, can be prevented by transitioning to a 'solar society' that 'processes primarily the radiant energy of the sun'. This goal could 'only be realised with and in an economy of solidarity', since none of the renewable energies fulfil the 'condition of the congruence of energy system and capitalism' and the 'change of the energy regime' thus requires 'changes in the mode of production and the mode of living' (213 et sq.). Altvater's position can be interpreted as an oil-and-climate collapse theory of capitalism. The climate argument is quite conceivable, because distributional conflicts triggered or intensified by climate change can result in unrest and possibly even revolutionary situations, but not necessarily. With regard to the oil

argument, the version of the capitalist mode of production as "fossilistic" does point to an important nexus, but is narrowed and excludes above all computer-based and advanced solar technologies. The techno-determinism implied in the suggested sequence "hand mill – steam mill – solar mill" is unconvincing in the face of renewable energy technologies that are largely integrated smoothly into capitalism, up to and including large-scale plants such as offshore wind farms and solar thermal power plants. In this sense, Daniel **Buck** stresses that the 'survival of capitalism' does not 'depend upon any particular technological milieu or framework, or any particular source of motive power' (2006, 65), but that, on the contrary, the specificity of the capitalist mode of production lies precisely in the permanent upheaval of the technological milieu as well.

This specificity is reflected in the attitude of capital, increasingly divided between ignoring the climate issue and taking it seriously. On the one hand, 'powerful interest groups from the coal, gas, and petroleum lobbies' try to resist any supposed economically damaging measure (**Brunnengräber** 2002, 207), while on the other hand, 'even the oil capitals' have long been concerned with the 'need to develop alternatives' in view of the finite nature of fossil resources (**Buck** 2006, 68), so that there is more behind the renaming of BP to "Beyond Petroleum" than a mere climate-related publicity stunt. In the 21st cent., huge markets and especially export markets are opening up both for processes for more efficient energy use (e.g. the one-litre car) and for renewable energy sources, especially export markets for the technologically leading industrial nations. Even for the fossil energy industry a more climate-friendly, end-of-pipe solution is emerging with the capture of carbon dioxide directly at the power plant and subsequent storage in geological formations. This, however, carries the risk of re-release – in a certain parallel to nuclear energy, which is also controversial in the Marxist spectrum, but whose impending climate policy renaissance would merely add 'another life-threatening risk' (**Hennicke/Seifried** 1992, 25). Further large-scale "geo-engineering"-proposals to circumvent any emission reductions are, for example, the reflection of solar radiation by injecting aerosols into the atmosphere, huge space mirrors, the storage of carbon dioxide in the deep sea by direct injection, or iron fertilisation of the oceans (cf. **Foster** 2002, 20 et sq.).

The financial sector earns money from the trade in emission rights, the certification of emissions creates a whole new line of business, and banks offer climate change funds. Sectors directly affected by climate impacts, such as agriculture and forestry, have a vital interest in the climate. Insurance companies fear climate damage that is difficult to calculate, 'which they can only counter by increasing insurance premiums and by removing climate risks from insur-

ance coverage' (**Scheer** 2005, 50). Adaptation to climate change also requires massive investments worldwide: Under the inflationary label of "climate proofing", everything should increasingly be fortified against climate impacts, from projects in the construction sector and flood protection to health care and development cooperation projects.

Alain **Lipietz** (2000) diagnoses a global 'ecological overconsumption crisis' as a consequence of the Fordist development model, which initially appeared as a '"good" compromise between labour and capital', but which increasingly proved to be 'strictly unsustainable' in ecological terms (59 et sq.). After the workers' and environmental movement were mostly opposed to each other in Fordism, 'a political space for a reunion' opened up in post-Fordism due to the ecologically precarious conditions, making it possible then to 'impose a new social regulation on the market', which is to be 'combined with more binding environmental regulation' (61 et sq.). However, here – in addition to converging interests such as jobs in the climate sector, reduction of energy costs through increased efficiency, and protection against climate impacts – diverging interests such as job losses in sectors heavily dependent on fossil fuels and restriction of consumption, including but not limited to higher energy prices, must also be considered. One starting point could be the fight for more operational co-determination in production processes and technology development.

In view of the development claims of the South and the 'non-generalisability of the Northern development model' (**Missbach** 1999, 11), the climate problem demands globally just solutions. A basic demand put forward early on by Anil **Agarwal** and Sunita **Narain** from a Southern perspective and recognised at UNCED 1992 as an alternative to the "grandfathering principle" is that every human being should be entitled to equal access to lower natural carbon – a considerable but variable proportion of the greenhouse gases emitted each year are absorbed by oceans and terrestrial ecosystems (1991, 7). First, a target stabilisation level of atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations would have to be negotiated, and then country budgets of annually allowed emissions would have to be allocated according to equal per capita emission rights. The internationally influential **Stern** Review, commissioned by the British government, sets a stabilisation level of 450–550 ppm (parts per million) carbon dioxide equivalent, which could be maintained with global emissions reduced by 80 % compared to 2006 – in 2006 the concentration was already around 430 ppm with an annual increase of over 2 ppm (2006, vii). The stabilisation level is usually calculated back from a set warming limit, such as the "two-degree target" for avoiding dangerous climate change (i.e. limiting global warming to 2°C above the pre-industrial mean temperature) issued by the EU in 2005, to which about 450 ppm carbon dioxide equivalent corresponds (see IPCC 2007).

However, the two-degree target by no means guarantees the absence of dangerous climate impacts for all people, not least because of the uncertainties in the climate system. As a fair and effective climate policy instrument, the British economist David **Fleming** proposed in 1996 equal and tradable per capita emission rights also at the individual level. A basic income of this kind, in the form of emission rights, is being discussed as a contribution to the redistribution of wealth within society in some industrialised countries at the beginning of the 21st cent. (cf. **Staud/Reimer** 2007, 75 et sqq.).

According to Joan **Martínez Alier**, as long as a global convergence of per capita emission rights is not implemented, the 'carbon debt' owed by the rich countries to the poorer countries will increase due to the 'disproportionate use of environmental space' by the former (2002, 228 et sqq.). It is calculated, on the one hand, from the climate damage costs incurred in the poorer countries and, on the other hand, from the emission reduction costs in the rich countries, and adds up within a few years to financial claims in the magnitude of foreign debt of the South (230 et sq.). The historically accumulated carbon debt is so far nowhere legally enforceable, but it underlines the justification of the South's demands for damage compensation, adaptation assistance, and the patent-free transfer of technology, the latter to facilitate emission-intensive technology stages' leap-frogging. The extraction and transport of fossil fuels, which have serious negative consequences for the local population, also raises questions of global 'environmental justice'. Here, climate policy alliances with the 'environmental movement of the poor' arise, which, for example, fights against the oil extraction in the Niger Delta or gas pipelines in Thailand, since prevented extraction is at the same time climate protection (102–11).

Mohssen **Massarrat** sees global 'energy overproduction and energy dumping prices' since the beginning of the 20th cent. as the strongest impetus for wasteful consumption and 'particularly energy-intensive industrialisation patterns' (2000, 195 et sq.). Since the 'ecological effectiveness' of the two popular instruments of eco-taxes (due to imprecise targets) and emissions trading (due to bureaucratically high transaction costs) is doubtful (2006, 204), he propagates the 'direct quantity shortage of fossil energies' (2000, 243) at the sources of the 'approximately 100 major suppliers worldwide' (265). Global quantity regulation should be flanked by price-related higher energy revenues for the OPEC South and financial compensation for Southern countries lacking fossil resources within the framework of a 'North-South New Deal on climate policy' (262). Furthermore, a democratisation of the Gulf oligarchies (the oil-rich and population-poor so-called "OPEC doves" Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the UAE), which exchange Western military protection for stable oil quantit-

ies and low oil prices, could lead to oil scarcity prices and would therefore also be a contribution to climate protection (147 et sqq.). Whether the thesis on solar energy expressed in 2006 by the President of the Club of Rome, El Hassan **Bin Talal** – 'the countries of the Earth's Sun Belt and Technology Belt can become very powerful if they recognise themselves as a community [...] for the protection of the Earth's climate' (as cited in **Staud/Reimer** 2007, 107) – should be seen as an opportunity or a threat in this context remains to be seen.

Hermann **Scheer** (2005) advocates the concept of 'energy autonomy', i.e. a 'self-determined rather than heteronomous availability of energy', which is 'free and independent of external constraints, extortion, and intervention possibilities' and is only possible as the 'appropriation of renewable energy by a multitude of actors' (235). The counter-concept to be fought, he argues, is the 'integration of renewable energy into the existing energy supply system', for which he borrows the term 'passive revolution' from **Gramsci** (236). Global energy autonomy would not only be desirable in terms of climate and energy policy, but would also bring diverse forms of 'oil imperialism' (**Altvater** 2005, 163–71) and numerous conflicts over fossil resources in the Middle East, Central Asia, and Africa (**Massarrat** 2000, 151–67), as well as a peace politics dividend. "Peace through renewables" can thus complement the slogan "No blood for oil". From an analysis of the climate and energy policies of the G8 states at the beginning of the 21st cent., Achim **Brunnengräber** deduces that 'the high-profile but secondary agenda "climate protection" [...] is determined by the central agenda "energy security"' (2007, 113). The goal is the cheap availability of energy through a mix of renewable, fossil, and nuclear energies: Sometimes the expansion of renewable energies is an option, which is then sold as climate protection, but mostly access to fossil resources is secured or new ones are developed, such as oil shale in Canada or Arctic gas and oil fields (121 et sq.).

The broad spectrum of NGOs engaged in climate policy is heterogeneous and ambivalent. On the one hand, it includes 'grey NGOs' such as trade associations and industrial lobbies (**Missbach** 1999, 279); on the other hand, supposedly progressive NGOs, such as those organised worldwide in the Climate Action Network, including Greenpeace and WWF, play a dubious role. In the course of their attempts to influence international climate negotiations, they increasingly experienced a 'weakening through integration' (**Scheer** 2005, 213) and thus went from being the 'sand in the gears' to the 'oil in the gears' (215), with Southern NGOs tending to be more critical than Northern NGOs, 'but mostly underrepresented' (**Brunnengräber** 2002, 208). In the case of controversial CDM activities by companies, NGOs – always on the lookout for donations –

often help to 'outsource legitimacy' and give the 'moral stamp of approval' (**Bachram** 2004, 15). In addition, however, there are thousands of grassroots initiatives worldwide which, for example, set up collective energy production with wind turbines or solar plants or carry out educational campaigns on climate impacts and adaptation options (18 et sq.).

3.4 *The role of science.* – CP and research on climate and climate impact are mutually interdependent, with the former primarily interested in gaining legitimacy and the latter constantly having to prove its *raison d'être*. Thus, the establishment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) as the world's highest-ranking climate science body, which since 1988 has been producing so-called assessment reports and in which thousands of scientists are organised, was partly motivated by the goal of governmental 'control over greenhouse research' (**Missbach** 1999, 237 et sq.). Government representatives are even allowed to directly influence the IPCC's policy-advising summary reports (e.g. 2007), which often leads to night-long haggling over politically explosive passages.

The production of knowledge relevant to climate policy is embedded in hegemonic discourses and power structures, and the results produced are filtered, withheld, or modified by a variety of selection mechanisms. On the one hand, the knowledge of anthropogenic global warming gained from climate models, for example, has had to be defended again and again since the 1970s against so-called climate sceptics, who were deliberately launched by the "fossil industry", among others. On the other hand, research, particularly in the field of climate impacts and protection strategies, is based in part on questionable value judgements, e.g. with regard to the question of which climate impacts are deemed worthy of research or the extent to which the 'social differentiation' of vulnerability to climate change is taken into account (**Dietz** 2006, 15). Many of the economic (cost-benefit) analyses on climate change are problematic, as they are based on predominantly neoclassical models, questionable discounting of future "benefits", and the 'monetarisation of what cannot be monetised at all' (**Altvater** 2005, 173), although some of these studies – e.g. the **Stern** Review, according to which the costs of climate protection to avert the worst consequences of climate change amount to 1% of global GNP, while global "consumption losses" of 5–20% can be expected in the absence of climate protection (2006, vi) – have had an enormous impact on climate policy. In all this, the scientific apparatus of the rich countries is an additional power factor, not least because the poorer countries do not have the required scientific capacities to be sufficiently prepared for the countless and often decisive detailed problems in climate negotiations.

3.5 *Ideological instrumentalisation and the struggle for global hegemony*. – The 'reference to "all of us being affected" and the alleged "common good" to be safeguarded' is well suited 'for the ideological production of a willingness to make sacrifices' (**Hennicke/Seifried** 1992, 24). Moreover, concern over the climate gives every state a form of legitimacy. Against this background, an increasing instrumentalisation of the climate problem is to be expected in the 21st cent., as can be seen, for example, in the emerging "new climate determinism", which, like globalisation, blames climate change for problems that by and large have other causes. Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans in 2005, for example, was often portrayed as a climate catastrophe to which people were helplessly exposed, instead of, for example, it being pointed out that the deterioration of precautionary measures made this hurricane a catastrophe in the first place.

In the struggle for global hegemony, the climate issue has played an increasingly important role since the beginning of the 21st cent., on the one hand because the USA is threatening to fail as a 'sustainable hegemonic power' as long as it adheres to "fossilism" (**Missbach** 1999, 292), and on the other hand because climate protection could occupy the vacant place of a convincing "global mission", especially after other projects claiming to protect the global commons – such as the "war on drugs", the "war on terror", and the "war for human rights" – have increasingly fallen under criticism. Climate protection could thus become the legitimising point for establishing a new hegemonic bloc. At least the US has recognised that a "war for climate" has the potential of a global mission, but that the EU has a comparatively better starting position, partly because it bases its hegemonic strategy of climate policy on the multilateral Kyoto process. In order to get rid of its image as a "climate villain", the USA presented the AP6 initiative on climate protection in 2006 as a climate policy "coalition of the willing" standing outside the UN (together with Australia, Japan, China, and India, among others).

In the 1990s a metaphorical shift can be observed, from the criticised "war against the climate" (or more generally: "war against the environment", metaphorically negated in the name 'Greenpeace') to the "war in favour of/for the climate" (cf. **Weingart** et al. 2002, 113 et sqq.). This metaphorical component could be abandoned in the 21st cent. in favour of real wars against "climate killers", as a consideration by Norman **Moss** from the perspective of the British military makes clear: If the South refuses the emission reductions imposed on it one day, 'we should defend ourselves by bombing their power stations' and 'send troops to protect the rainforest' (as cited in **Missbach** 1999, 13 et sq.).

4. From the beginning of the 21st cent., no all-clear signal can be given. Despite the *Kyoto Protocol*, carbon dioxide emissions alone will probably 'increase

worldwide by at least 20 % by 2012', although climate researchers have recommended a reduction of 15 % for the same period (**Massarrat** 2006, 200). However, the discursive explosion of the climate issue – which is due to the interaction of heterogeneous factors such as new findings from climate research, committed environmental organisations, the crumbling opposition of capital against climate protection, and various attempts to instrumentalise the climate issue – made all other environmental and also social problems fade away in many industrialised countries at times.

One element in the climate discourse are appeals to change in consumer behaviour. They are undoubtedly justified, and a transition to less 'consumerist lifestyles' could at the same time offer an opportunity for 'greater human happiness' (**Panayotakis** 2006, 268 et sq.). However, an "individualisation of the climate problem" comes up against narrow limits, since economic, political, and social structures make it difficult or impossible for people to emit fewer greenhouse gases. Emancipatory CP must work to change these structures and make it clear that effective climate protection would be largely facilitated by doing so. Beyond paralysing catastrophism, reforms would have to be conceived in the sense of a "revolutionary climate realpolitik" that starts in the here and now of everyday life – not only of the way of life, but also of the way of production and distribution – and points beyond the capitalist logic of profit. The task is to forge strategic alliances that take advantage of contradictory interests within capital or between states. At the same time, forms of movement must be created for antagonisms between workers themselves, and the contradictions that arise within the left must be balanced. The ambivalent role of the state should not fall out of sight: On the one hand, it is indispensable in the present circumstances, for example, in order to enforce climate protection against capital interests; on the other hand, the state's fixation on the climate question must not blind us to the danger that the climate problem can produce ecodictatorial-imperialist solutions – analogous to early historical climate change, which possibly paved the way for archetypes of the authoritarian state and, mediated by it, also produced new levels of culture.

Oliver Walkenhorst
Translated by Kolja Swingle

Bibliography

A. **Agarwal**, S. **Narain**, *Global Warming in an Unequal World. A Case of Environmental Colonialism*, Delhi 1991.

E. **Altvater**, *Das Ende des Kapitalismus wie wir ihn kennen*, Münster 2005.

H. **Bachram**, 'Climate Fraud and Carbon Colonialism: The New Trade in Greenhouse Gases', *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, vol. 15, 2004, no. 4, 5–20.

K.-H. **Bernhardt**, F. **Kortüm**, 'Beeinflussung der Atmosphäre durch menschliche Aktivitäten', *Geodätische und Geophysikalische Veröffentlichungen*, series II, 1976, no. 21, 3–62.

P. **Bond**, R. **Dada** (eds.), *Trouble in the Air. Global Warming and the Privatised Atmosphere*, Durban 2005.

N. **Brooks**, 'Cultural Responses to Aridity in the Middle Holocene and Increased Social Complexity', *Quaternary International* 151, vol. 18, 2006, 29–49.

E. **Brown Weiss**, 'International Responses to Weather Modification', *International Organization*, vol. 29, 1975, no. 3, 805–26.

A. **Brunnengräber**, 'Umwelt- oder Gesellschaftskrise? Zur politischen Ökonomie des Klimas', Görg/Brand 2002, 192–215.

A. **Brunnengräber**, 'Energiesicherheit vor Klimaschutz', H. Melber, C. Wilß (eds.), *G8 Macht Politik*, Frankfurt/M 2007, 113–23.

D. **Buck**, 'The Ecological Question: Can Capitalism Prevail?', Panitch/Leys 2006, 60–71.

V.G. **Childe**, *Man Makes Himself* (1936), New York 1951.

K. **Dietz**, *Vulnerabilität und Anpassung gegenüber Klimawandel aus sozial-ökologischer Perspektive*, Berlin 2006.

Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers*, ed. by J. Miller, transl. by P. Mensch, Oxford 2018.

M.K. **Dorsey**, 'Climate Knowledge and Power: Tales of Skeptic Tanks, Weather Gods, and Sagas for Climate (In)Justice', *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, vol. 18, 2007, no. 2, 7–21.

Empedocles, *The Poem of Empedocles*, transl. by B. Inwood, rev. edn., Toronto 2001.

H.M. **Enzensberger**, 'Zur Kritik der politischen Ökologie', *Kursbuch* 33, vol. 9, 1973, 1–42.

G. **Erion**, 'Low Hanging Fruit Always Rots First: South Africa's Crony Carbon Market', Bond/Dada 2005, 88–131.

J.B. **Foster**, *Ecology Against Capitalism*, New York 2002.

Ch. **Görg**, U. **Brand** (eds.), *Mythen globalen Umweltmanagements*, Münster 2002.

U. **Hampicke**, 'Kapitalistische Expansion und Umweltzerstörung', *Argument* 93, vol. 17, 1975, 794–821.

W. **Harich**, *Kommunismus ohne Wachstum?*, Reinbek 1975.

W.F. **Haug**, *Gorbatschow. Versuch über den Zusammenhang seiner Gedanken*, Hamburg 1989.

W.F. **Haug**, *Elemente einer Theorie des Ideologischen*, Hamburg 1993.

P. **Hennicke**, D. **Seifried**, 'Die Stabilisierung des Klimas: Ein anderer Umgang mit Energie', *Prokla* 86, vol. 22, 1992, no. 1, 23–33.

T.J. **House** et al., *Weather as a Force Multiplier: Owning the Weather in 2025*, 1996 (www).

IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), *Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report*, 2007 (www).

E. **Leff**, 'Die Geopolitik nachhaltiger Entwicklung – Ökonomisierung des Klimas, Rationalisierung der Umwelt und die gesellschaftliche Wiederaneignung der Natur', Görg/Brand 2002, 92–117.

M. **Lindow**, 'A New Source of African Finance', Bond/Dada 2005, 54–63.

A. **Lipietz**, *Die große Transformation des 21. Jahrhunderts. Ein Entwurf der politischen Ökologie*, transl. from the French by F.O. Wolf, Münster 2000.

J. **Martinez-Alier**, *The Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation*, Cheltenham 2002.

M. **Massarrat**, *Das Dilemma der ökologischen Steuerreform*, 2nd rev. edn., Marburg 2000.

M. **Massarrat**, *Kapitalismus, Machtungleichheit, Nachhaltigkeit*, Hamburg 2006.

W. **Methe**, *Ökologie und Marxismus. Ein Neuansatz zur Rekonstruktion der politischen Ökonomie unter ökologischen Krisenbedingungen*, Hanover 1981.

A. **Missbach**, *Das Klima zwischen Nord und Süd*, Münster 1999.

J. **O'Connor**, *Natural Causes: Essays in Ecological Marxism*, New York-London 1998.

C. **Panayotakis**, 'Working More, Selling More, Consuming More: Capitalism's "Third Contradiction"', Panitch/Leys 2006, 254–72.

L. **Panitch**, C. **Leys** (eds.), *Coming to Terms with Nature*, London a.o. 2006.

L. **Ponte**, *The Cooling*, Englewood Cliffs 1976.

V. **Radke**, 'Alles ein große Verschwörung', *Jungle World*, no. 32, 2007, 18.

J.T. **Roberts**, P.E. **Grimes**, J.L. **Manale**, 'Social Roots of Global Environmental Change: A World-Systems Analysis of Carbon Dioxide Emissions', *Journal of World-Systems Research*, vol. 9, 2003, no. 2, 277–315.

G. **Sardemann**, 'Beeinflussung des globalen Klimas durch den Menschen: Historische Entwicklung und Stand des Wissens zum anthropogenen Treibhauseffekt', J. Kopfmüller, R. Coenen (eds.), *Risiko Klima*, Frankfurt/M-New York 1997, 27–73.

H. **Scheer**, *Energieautonomie*, Munich 2005.

E. **Schramm** (ed.), *Ökologie-Lesebuch*, Frankfurt/M 1984.

T. **Staud**, N. **Reimer**, *Wir Klimaretter*, Cologne 2007.

N. **Stern**, *The Economics of Climate Change: The Stern Review. Summary of Conclusions*, London 2006 (www).

V. **Wallis**, 'Socialism and Technology: A Sectoral Overview', *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, vol. 17, 2006, no. 2, 81–97.

S.R. **Weart**, *The Discovery of Global Warming*, Cambridge (MA)-London 2003.

M. **Weber**, *Gender, Klimawandel und Klimapolitik*, Berlin 2005 (www).

P. **Weingart** et al., *Von der Hypothese zur Katastrophe. Der anthropogene Klimawandel im Diskurs zwischen Wissenschaft, Politik und Massenmedien*, Opladen 2002.

K.A. **Wittfogel**, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Chinas*, Leipzig 1931.
K.A. **Wittfogel**, 'Die Theorie der orientalischen Gesellschaft', *ZfS*, vol. 7, 1938, 90–122.

→ asiatic mode of production, basic contradiction, capital fractions, capitalist mode of production, catastrophism, climate, consumer, consumptionism / consumerism, critique of science, destructive forces, development, development of forces of production, ecological colonialism, ecological dictatorship, ecological economy, ecological imperialism, ecological modernisation, ecologisation of production, ecology, economic politics, eco-socialism, energy, entropy, environment, excrements of production, externalisation of costs, faux frais, generic questions / species problems, genesis of the state, geopolitics, globalisation, Green New Deal, high-technological mode of production, ideology critique, immaterial goods / immaterial damage, industrialisation, justice, Keynesianism, limits of growth, Malthusianism, materialism (geographic), metabolism, nature domination, nature relations, new social movements, North-South conflict, peace movement, petro-socialism, resources, ruinous exploitation, second contradiction of capitalism, sustainable development, unequal exchange

→ asiatische Produktionsweise, Destruktivkräfte, Energie, Entropie, Entwicklung, Exkremente der Produktion, faux frais, Friedensbewegung, Gattungsfragen, Geopolitik, Gerechtigkeit, Globalisierung, Grenzen des Wachstums, Grundwiderspruch, Grüner New Deal, hochtechnologische Produktionsweise, Ideologiekritik, immaterielle Güter/immaterieller Schaden, Industrialisierung, Kapitalfraktionen, kapitalistische Produktionsweise, Katastrophismus, Keynesianismus, Klima, Konsument/Verbraucher, Konsumismus, Kostenexternalisierung, Malthusianismus, Materialismus (geographischer), nachhaltige Entwicklung, Naturbeherrschung, Naturverhältnisse (gesellschaftliche), Neue Soziale Bewegungen, Nord-Süd-Konflikt, Ökodiktatur, Ökokolonialismus, Ökologie, ökologische Modernisierung, ökologischer Imperialismus, ökologische Wirtschaft, Ökologisierung der Produktion, Ökosozialismus, Petrosozialismus, Produktivkraftentwicklung, Raubbau, Ressourcen, Staatsentstehung, Stoffwechsel, Umwelt, ungleicher Tausch, Wirtschaftspolitik, Wissenschaftskritik, zweiter Widerspruch des Kapitalismus

CHAPTER 6

Colonial Mode of Production

A: namaṭ al-ʾintāǧ ʾistiʿmārī. – F: mode de production colonial. – G: koloniale Produktionsweise. – R: kolonial'nyj sposob proizvodstva. – S: modo de producción colonial. – C: zhímín de shēngchǎn fāngshì 殖民的生产方式

From 1967 onwards, in the early years of India's Maoist-Naxalite insurgency and at the time of the first wave of the Green Revolution, there were theoretical arguments over whether Indian agriculture had made the transition to capitalism after a long period of colonial rule, whether – as the Maoists thought – it was still in a semi-feudal state, or whether feudalism and capitalism were in a standoff, existing side by side (see **Wielenga** 1976; **Thorner** 1982). The accompanying political debates therefore centred around whether the antifeudal struggle was still the main revolutionary task, or if it was instead a misleading transposition of European models onto the postcolonial situation. The proposal to use the conceptualisation of a CMP to get a better grip on the complex problems of analysing colonialism and its long-term effects promised a novel approach to issues concerning how colonial structures continued to have an effect in postcolonial situations. The resulting concept, emerging out of a critical examination of both dependency theory and the theory of articulation of modes of production, represents a genuinely South Asian contribution to the debate.

1. The discussion regarding the CMP has its antecedent in the debate around the 'Asiatic mode of production' (see **Banerjee** 1985). Common to both is the issue of factors that inhibit a capitalist development of pre-capitalist structures. The **Lenin-Roy** debate at the Second Comintern Congress, over the role of the national bourgeoisie and the working class in the anti-colonial revolution, showed that 'a rigorous analysis of the class structure of even one colonial country simply did not exist' (**Kössler** 1982, 37). Instead, one could at best demonstrate that colonial countries had been fixed at a certain 'stage' on the path of development from feudalism to capitalism (ibid.). The term CMP had still yet to be used in the Comintern debates on revolutionary strategy in China – which in the 1920s had developed into a training ground for the paradigmatic treatment of Asian problems – but related questions within debates about the 'Asiatic mode of production' had made it onto the agenda. For example, prior to **Stalin**'s declaration that there was an iron logic of history which was restricted

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_007
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

to five successive modes of production, there were deliberations over whether a merchant capitalist social formation had developed in China which, through the destruction of the productive foundations of the peasant economy, had itself undermined the premise of simple reproduction (**Kössler** 1982, 203 et sqq.).

It was dependency theory, developed in Latin America since the 1960s by André Gunder **Frank** et al., which gave a new impetus to problematising the interrelation between colonialism and growth. By radically criticising modernisation theory and recognising that the underdevelopment of former colonial countries is a result of colonialism, it at the same time rejected the "dual economy" theory – widespread within the left at the time – in which a traditional sector that remained self-contained was held responsible for the backwardness of the colonial countries. In emphasising the structural interrelation between colonialism and underdevelopment, dependency theory sees the colonial economies as being bound up in a world capitalist system. In contrast, the theory of articulation, popularised by Ernesto **Laclau** (1971) and Pierre-Philippe **Rey** (1971) among others, emphasises that the diversity of the actually-existing relations can only be thought of as a "linking" of different modes of production, as a varying juxtaposition and entanglement of pre-capitalist and capitalist structures (see **Amin** 1970/1974 and 1973/1976; **Wolpe** 1980).

In the context of this debate, the Indian historian Jairus **Banaji** (1972) and the Pakistani development sociologist Hamza **Alavi** (1975) made the proposal to assume the existence of one or more (structurally similar) CMPs in analyses of colonialism, so that the fundamentally different position of the colonial countries within the world capitalist system, and the resulting structural particularities, can be more clearly grasped (see **Foster-Carter** 1978). The most important insight is that the CMPs 'transmitted to the colonies the pressures of the accumulation process in the metropolis' without a corresponding development of the forces of production (**Banaji** 1972/1990, 126). Primitive accumulation 'outside the colonial world' is the foremost 'historical function' of these modes of production (ibid.).

Alavi sees the major heuristic advantage of the concept of CMP in the explanation it makes possible: showing how, on the one hand, colonialism profoundly transforms pre-capitalist relations, providing the preconditions for and initiating capitalist development, yet on the other hand it does so while establishing structural obstacles to the type of development modelled on the metropolitan countries. The complex structure of CMP, which in relation to postcolonial development is also discussed under the term 'peripheral capitalism', can be distinguished from the characteristic features of both feudalism and capitalism by its independent structures in the form of the colonial state,

the nature of general commodity production, and the peculiarity of the extended reproduction of capital (1975, esp. 186–89; 1982a, 179; **Banaji** 1972, 121 et sq.).

This complexity is evident in the analysis of colonial India. While the privatisation of land and the dispossession of poor peasants through economic coercion are common characteristics of capitalist development, conceptualising the 'internal disarticulation' of the economy due to colonialism and its 'external integration' into the metropolitan economy (**Alavi** 1975, 174) requires in particular that colonial society be clearly distinguished from the pre-capitalist social formation on the one hand and from metropolitan capitalism on the other.

General commodity production is one of the hallmarks of the capitalist mode of production. It destroys local subsistence production, promotes the production of commodities for sale in local and international markets, and integrates the affected economies into colonial trade as markets for metropolitan products. However, these processes take place in a specific form, conditioned by colonial structures, which distinguishes peripheral from metropolitan capitalism. Instead of an integrated process of development involving industry and agriculture as well as the production of capital goods and consumer goods, the colonial economy continues to be 'not internally complete' and functions only in a 'disarticulated' form, namely through external connections to the metropolis; the same goes for the extended reproduction of capital, in which the accumulation required for capitalist development does take place, but outside of it, in the metropolitan centre (**Alavi** 1982a, 179 et sqq.).

The term 'disarticulation' (see **Amin** 1970/1974 and 1982) therefore designates the disintegration of the internal relations of the precolonial economy, while 'rearticulation' describes the linking of the disjoined segments to the metropolitan economy (**Alavi** 1975, 187 et sq.). The resulting generalised commodity production and extended reproduction are thus torn apart and "deformed", features typical of the colonial form. Another feature typical of colonialism is the integration of the numerous smallholders into a system in which they serve as downtrodden low-cost producers, which ensures low wages in the dependent workforce (187–89).

The structure of India's railway network clearly illustrates the distorted, fractured development that takes place under colonial rule. For one thing, railway construction has a profound impact on society. **Marx** hoped this process would bring about dynamic, revolutionary impulses (MECW 12/125–33 [MEW 9/220–26]). Indeed, markets were opened up, and imports and exports grew. However, the railway lines all led to the ports and thus to the foreign imperial centre, whereas the domestic connections had to be laboriously restored after independence. Analogous patterns can be found in the history of colonial sci-

ence. For example, even though Western medicine was introduced, its availability remained mostly restricted to the residential enclaves of the colonial power and their immediate surroundings, as well as to the army and prisons. It was only implemented more widely in the case of epidemics (see **Arnold** 1993).

In taking a critical stance towards dependency theory, proponents of the concept of CMP have sought a stronger emphasis on "systemic non-identity" and the fundamental difference between metropolitan and colonial relations, while maintaining, like the articulation theorists, the usefulness of modes of production as a framework. However – unlike the latter group – they attempt to fill this framework with a more extensive theorising of a singular "mode of production" and not (or not only) with articulation theory's fixed modes of production (each within a singular historically-concrete social formation) (**Alavi** 1975, 191 et sq.; **Banaji** 1972/1977, 4 et sqq., 11 et sqq.; see also **McEachern** 1976; but cf. **Foster-Carter** 1978). Following her microanalyses of colonialism in Sri Lanka, Asoka **Bandarage** (1983) has shown that while the approaches under discussion may be mutually exclusive in some instances, they can (and should) in fact often be utilised as building blocks for the construction of a synthetic theory. She uses Sri Lanka as an example to dismiss the theory of a strictly separate dual economy – despite the coffee and tea plantation economy being somewhat of an enclave – as 'a barrier to our understanding of the complexity and conflictive nature of social change in the colonies' (326). In contrast, she considers the theory of underdevelopment as well as of the hierarchical placement within the capitalist world order to be confirmed (331), while at the same time emphasising that British capital, the colonial state, and market forces did not sweep away precolonial relations overnight. She understands the resulting social relations not as remnants of feudalism, but rather as 'colonial adaptations of preexisting institutions' (338).

2. **Alavi**'s analyses of postcolonial *state structures* show that one of the outcomes of a colonial past is a relatively autonomous state that can be attributed to the coexistence of the dominant classes of large landowners, the indigenous and imperial bourgeoisie, and also the communication of their interests through a bureaucratic "overdeveloped" state. It is not the direct control of a single ruling class that limits that relative autonomy, but rather a 'structural imperative' which imposes limits upon the respective classes in the long term. This explains the extensive leeway that is occasionally given to the state under the conditions of (peripheral) capitalism in the face of the needs and dictates of capital (1982b, 294). In some of the African countries, **Alavi** discerns a second type of relatively autonomous postcolonial state where, in the absence of a

dominant class of large landowners, an educated middle class permeated by elements of a metropolitan bourgeoisie can dominate politically (300).

In addition to being subject to the conditions of peripheral capitalism, the state is also bound by structural limits and the arena of class struggles between the dominant classes over access to resources, share of profits, and state revenues (see **Hauck** 1979). In contrast to the dependency theorists' simplistic emphasis on the absolute dependency on metropolitan capital, **Alavi** stresses that the metropolitan bourgeoisie does not always automatically come out on top and must fight for its ascendant status in the postcolonial state. Admittedly, **Alavi** (1997) later revises this analysis when applying it to Pakistan: there, a feudal landowning class inherited the dominant position within the state, making the struggle against feudalism the primary task in this case. On the other hand, India can serve as a counterexample, where after independence the feudal class of large landowners was disempowered, so that the metropolitan bourgeoisie, the indigenous bourgeoisie, and wealthy farmers together are the dominant classes, at the same time competing against each other. This comparison underscores the extent to which relations vary from country to country, according to precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial conditions. This is especially true when comparing the characteristics of the respective bourgeois classes. In Sri Lanka, for example, an ascendant but politically feeble mercantile bourgeoisie developed. As is so often (though far from always) the case in colonial relations, this was a clientelistic comprador class – 'an appendage of imperialism, a "dependent" as opposed to an "independent" class, whose creation and continued existence was based on protection and opportunities provided by the colonial state' (**Jayawardena** 2001, xviii). This not only distinguished them from (the archetypal ideal of) the European bourgeoisie, but also from parts of the Indian bourgeoisie, which entered into an increasingly antagonistic relationship with the colonial rulers.

Looking back at the discussion which had been taking place, **Alavi** (1997) emphasised the theoretical and practical necessity of providing distinct models and concepts of social analysis for the conflicting ensembles of class structures and relations of production and exploitation in the colonial countries. He regrets that **Lenin**'s theses on the national and colonial question, presented at the Second Comintern Congress in 1920 (CW 31/241 [Werke, 31/229]), made the nascent Soviet Union's strategically-necessary military alliances with various anti-imperialist forces – e.g. with Persian Cossack commander Reza **Khan** (later proclaimed Shah) or Kemal **Atatürk** in Turkey – appear to be alliances with representatives of an ostensibly progressive national bourgeoisie. '**Stalin** and his heirs found here a theoretical weapon to justify their opportunist interstate alliances' (**Alavi** 1997). The strategic goal behind the concept of the CMP

had been to get away from the narrow scope of an antifeudal struggle led by a Eurocentric national bourgeoisie, and to obtain a better perspective on the anti-capitalist role of the lower strata of the peasantry.

3. The concepts of a CMP, put forth in analyses of the forms and factors of capitalist development in colonial countries, have contributed to identifying the specificity of colonial structures and their long-term effects. In critical engagement with articulation approaches, the honing of the concept of CMP has opened up avenues for the critique of colonial capitalism, as can be illustrated by the discussion in India, the largest colony of the first capitalist colonial empire (see **McEachern** 1982).

Related to this is the question of whether capitalism still needs new colonies in order to keep its extended reproduction in motion. This question stems from Rosa **Luxemburg**'s (*Accu*, CW 2, 432 et sq. [GW 5, 313 et sq.]) thesis of capitalism's systematic, permanent reliance on 'original' or 'primitive accumulation' for development, which compels it to continuously seek out areas which have not yet been colonised. Ecofeminists have shed light on this phenomenon by pointing out that women, Indigenous peoples, subsistence producers, and natural resources are the "last colonies" (**Mies**/**Bennholdt-Thomsen**/**Werlhof** 1983/1988; **Mies**/**Bennholdt-Thomsen** 1997/1999).

The informal colonisation of the remaining sources of wealth, imposed under the banner of neoliberal globalisation, requires a reformulation of the problem of articulation. The most important features of neocolonialist capitalism are a new global shift to divisions of labour being controlled by transnational corporations, the structural adjustment programmes of the IMF and the World Bank, the expansion of the ownership claims of capital through the WTO and TRIPS, the oil and water wars, the continued outsourcing of ecological costs, 'biopiracy' (Vandana **Shiva**) and the "enclosure" of the last "commons" – and with all of this the perpetuation of primitive accumulation based on the invisible labour of women, other subsistence labour, and the ruinous exploitation of nature.

The anti-colonial liberation movements of the 20th cent. went to great lengths to overcome colonial rule. They now find themselves facing a new colonialism. This raises the question of how those affected in the "first" and in the "last" colonies can join forces to mount a resistance. In doing so, the representatives of a socialist alternative will have to rethink how a sustainable subsistence-oriented mode of production can, ecologically and economically, point the way to overcoming global colonialism.

Bastiaan Wielenga
Translated by Rowan Coupland

Bibliography

H. **Alavi**, 'India and the Colonial Mode of Production', *Socialist Register* 1975, ed. R. Miliband/J. Saville, London 1975, 160–97.

H. **Alavi**, 'The Structure of Peripheral Capitalism' (1982a), *Introduction to the Sociology of 'Developing Societies'*, ed. H. Alavi, T. Shanin, New York 1982, 172–92.

H. **Alavi**, 'State and Class Under Peripheral Capitalism' (1982b), ibid., 289–307.

H. **Alavi**, 'Marxism, Ex-Colonial Societies and Strategies of the Left' (1997), www.

H. **Alavi** et al. (eds.), *Capitalism and Colonial Production*, London-Canberra 1982.

S. **Amin**, *Accumulation on a World Scale: A Critique of the Theory of Underdevelopment* (1970), New York 1974.

S. **Amin**, *Unequal Development: An Essay on the Social Formations of Peripheral Capitalism* (1973), Hassocks 1976.

S. **Amin**, 'The Disarticulation of the Economy within "Developing Societies"', Alavi/Shanin 1982, 205–09.

D. **Arnold**, *Colonizing the Body: State Medicine and Epidemic Disease in Nineteenth-Century India*, Delhi 1993.

J. **Banaji**, 'For a Theory of Colonial Modes of Production' (1972), *Agrarian Relations and Accumulation: The 'Mode of Production' Debate in India*, ed. U. Patnaik, Bombay 1990, 119–31.

J. **Banaji**, 'Modes of Production in a Materialist Conception of History', *Capital & Class* 3, 1977, 1–44.

A. **Bandarage**, *Colonialism in Sri Lanka: The Political Economy of the Kandyan Highlands*, 1833–1886, Berlin/W 1983.

D. **Banerjee** (ed.), *Marxian Theory and the Third World*, New Delhi-London 1985.

A. **Foster-Carter**, 'The Modes of Production Controversy', *NLR* 107, vol. 19, 1978, 47–77.

A.G. **Frank**, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America: Historical Studies of Chile and Brazil*, New York-London 1967.

G. **Hauck**, 'Typen kolonialer Produktionsweise', *Argument* 114, vol. 21, 1979, 194–205.

K. **Jayawardena**, *Nobodies to Somebodies: The Rise of the Colonial Bourgeoisie in Sri Lanka*, New Delhi 2001.

R. **Kössler**, *Dritte Internationale und Bauernrevolution: Die Herausbildung des sowjetischen Marxismus in der Debatte um die 'asiatische' Produktionsweise*, Frankfurt/M 1982.

E. **Laclau**, 'Feudalism and Capitalism in Latin America', *NLR* 67, vol. 12, 1971, 19–38.

D. **McEachern**, 'The Mode of Production in India', *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, vol. 6, 1976, no. 4, 444–57.

D. **McEachern**, 'Capitalism and Colonial Production: An Introduction', Alavi et al. 1982, 1–21.

M. **Mies**, V. **Bennholdt-Thomsen**, C.v. **Werlhof**, *Women: The Last Colony* (1983), London 1988.

M. **Mies**, V. **Bennholdt-Thomsen**, *The Subsistence Perspective: Beyond the Globalised Economy* (1997), London 1999.

P.P. **Rey**, *Colonialisme, néo-colonialisme, et transition au capitalisme*, Paris 1971.

V. **Shiva**, *Biopiracy*: *The Plunder of Nature and Knowledge*, Dartington 1997.

A. **Thorner**, 'Semi-Feudalism or Capitalism? Contemporary Debate on Classes and Modes of Production in India', *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol. 17, 1982, no. 49, 1961–68, no. 50, 1993–99, no. 51, 2061–66.

B. **Wielenga**, *Marxist Views on India in Historical Perspective*, Bangalore 1976.

H. **Wolpe** (ed.), *The Articulation of Modes of Production*, London 1980.

→ accumulation, African mode of production, anti-colonialism, articulation, Asiatic mode of production, clientelism, colonialism, comprador class, cultural imperialism, debate on feudalism, decolonisation, dependency theory, developing countries, domestic labour debate, ecological colonialism, Fanonism, formation theory, Green Revolution, housewifisation, imperialism, Indian question, internal colonialism, metropolis, mode of production, national bourgeoisie, neocolonialism, non-capitalist way, peripheral capitalism, periphery/centre, postcolonialism, postcolonial socialism, pre-capitalist modes of production, primitive accumulation, ruinous exploitation, social formation, subsistence production, Third World, tributary mode of production, underdevelopment, world-system

→ afrikanische Produktionsweise, Akkumulation, Antikolonialismus, Artikulation/Gliederung, asiatische Produktionsweise, Dependenztheorie, Dritte Welt, Entkolonisierung, Entwicklungsländer, Fanonismus, Feudalismus-Debatte, Formationstheorie, Gesellschaftsformation, Grüne Revolution, Hausarbeitsdebatte, Hausfrauisierung, Imperialismus, Indische Frage, innerer Kolonialismus, Klientelismus, Kolonialismus, Kompradorenklasse, Kulturimperialismus, Metropolen, nationale Bourgeoisie, Neokolonialismus, nichtkapitalistischer Weg, Ökokolonialismus, peripherer Kolonialismus, Peripherie/Zentrum, postkolonialer Sozialismus, Postkolonialismus, Produktionsweise, Raubbau, Subsistenzproduktion, tributäre Produktionsweise, Unterentwicklung, ursprüngliche Akkumulation, vorkapitalistische Produktionsweisen, Weltsystem

CHAPTER 7

Conjuncture, Politico-historical

A: waḍʿ siyāsī-tārīḫī. – F: conjoncture historico-politique. – G: politisch-historische Konjunktur. – R: istoriko-političeskaja konjunktura. – S: coyuntura (histórico-política). – C: qíngkuàng (zhèngzhì lìshǐ de) 情况 (政治历史的)

For Ben **Brewster** and Louis **Althusser**, the concept of 'C' is nothing less than 'the central concept of the Marxist science of politics' (Glossary of *For Marx* and *Reading Capital*, 1969 and 1970). It indicates 'the exact balance of forces, [the] state of overdetermination of the contradictions at any given moment to which political tactics must be applied' (ibid.). Unlike C in the sense of fluctuation, eminently compatible with various teleological philosophies of history, the concept of C in its developed form is decisively anti-teleological, as well as firmly opposed to economic or class-reductionism. Social changes, also those that are structural, take place in and through Cs with many determinations. As an analytical tool, the concept of C can expand the capacity to act politically by helping to examine the conditions of a political intervention in their complexity, that is, to trace the displacements and condensations of different sorts of contradictions, and thus open up possibilities for action.

1. The Latin *coniungere* – to bind, to join – continues to mark the modern meaning of C as a 'combination of many circumstances or causes' (Samuel **Johnson**, *Dictionary of the English Language*, 1755). In **Diderot** and **d'Alembert**'s *Encyclopædia* (1751–65), *conjoncture* is defined as 'the coexistence in time of many related facts, which change the one to the other [...]: the Cs would be, if it were permitted to say so, the circumstances of the times, and the circumstances would be the Cs of the thing'. – In German, the word *Konjunktur* has most of all a strong association with economic C, in the sense of economic fluctuation. This is often transposed to the cultural realm meaning that something is in fashion.

The theoretical elaboration of C can be located in astrology/astronomy, a product of 'natural curiosity', a 'daughter of ignorance' and a 'mother of knowledge', which 'is born when wonder arouses the human mind' (**Vico** 1744/1999, Book II, Section I, § 377). According to this doctrine, decisive historical crises, such as the demise of states, changes in leadership or changes of cultural or religious orientation, were ordered by the movements of the heavenly bodies. Theoretical interest in the 'great Cs' was reinforced not least by the practical

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_008
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

interests of kings and other rulers in gaining the foreknowledge that would allow them to secure their power. Thus, the opposition to '*divinatores horoscopios*' and the '*coniunctionistas*' that is common in **Ibn Khaldun**, Nicholas **Oresme**, and Henry of **Langenstein** (**Garin** 1983, 1–28) encouraged a critique of domination. This secularisation foregrounded the anti-idealistic perspective of **Machiavelli**, 'the first theorist of the C' (**Althusser** 1999, 18), for whom *fortuna*, despite 'the great changes that have taken place and are still to be seen even now, which could hardly have been predicted', was only an 'arbiter of half of our actions'. Even when *fortuna* acts like an 'enraged' river, 'this does not mean that, when the river is not in flood, men are unable to take precautions, by means of dykes and dams' (*The Prince*, Chapter XXV).

2. The young **Marx** in 1842 mocked the representatives of the nobility who saw freedom 'as the supernatural gift of an especially favourable constellation of the stars, because they regard freedom as merely an *individual property* of certain persons and social estates'. However, 'in order to save the special freedoms of privilege, they proscribe' – as an ideological anti-matter – 'the universal [*allgemeine*] freedom of human nature' (MECW 1/151 et sq. [MEW 1/47]). Since Marx and **Engels** see complex and historically transforming social relations through the lens of a *revolutionary praxis*, they consistently aim to produce a concrete, non-reductionist analysis of specific Cs and constellations [*Konstellationen*] and their structural conditions. They sarcastically cite and criticise Karl **Grün**: 'Of course, there is no need for a true socialist, absorbed in his intimacy with "human essence", to know anything about what "may arise from the economic position and the political constellation" of a country' (MECW 5/490 [MEW 3/477]). Max **Stirner** does not fare any better: 'Instead of making a real analysis of the C of conditions, which with the rule of the bourgeoisie became a totally different C of totally different conditions, Saint Sancho leaves it in the form of the general category "C, etc.", and bestows on it the still more indefinite name of the "fortuitousness of circumstances", as though the "commands and arbitrariness of individuals" are not themselves a "C of conditions". Having thus done away with the real basis of communism, i.e., the *definite* C of conditions under the bourgeois regime, he can now also transform this airy communism into his holy communism' (222 et sq. [204]). – **Marx** does indeed speak of the 'C of circumstances' or also of 'unfavourable Cs' (MECW 37/511; translation modified [MEW 25/530]), but he usually employs instead "relations", "articulation" [*Gliederung*], "situation" [*Lage*; sometimes he also uses *Situation*].

3. **Lenin** wrote in 1917 that 'there are no miracles in nature or history'; 'every abrupt turn in history, and this applies to every revolution, presents such

a wealth of content, unfolds such unexpected and specific combinations of forms of struggle and alignment of forces of the contestants, that to small-minded types there is much that must appear miraculous' (CW 23/297; translation modified). – The outbreak of the First World War, its causes and the possibilities of opposing it in a situation of increasing militarisation were a challenge for radical political thinking, giving new impetus for assessing different converging or opposing tendencies and weighing their relative importance. According to Rosa **Luxemburg**, the 'incident in Sarajevo' only provided the 'immediate pretext' for war: 'Causes and conflicts for the war had been overripe for a long time. The C that we witness today was ready a decade ago' (*Crisis*, 1916, GW 4, 106).

Like **Luxemburg**, **Lenin** also tries to develop a political intervention capable of ending the War and shifting the political power relations: 'the idea that the Russian proletariat is the chosen revolutionary proletariat among the workers of the world is absolutely alien to us. We know perfectly well that the proletariat of Russia is *less* organised, less prepared and less class-conscious than the proletariat of other countries. It is not its special qualities, but rather the special C of historical circumstances that *for a certain, perhaps very short time*, has made the proletariat of Russia the vanguard of the revolutionary proletariat of the whole world' (CW 23/371). Only 'as a result of an extremely unique historical situation, *absolutely dissimilar currents, absolutely heterogeneous* class interests, *absolutely contrary* political and social strivings have merged' in the revolution that brought down **Nicholas II** (302). Thus, in early 1917 'a very exceptional C of circumstances' made possible a '*transition* from the first to the second stage of the revolution, from revolt against Tsarism to revolt against the bourgeoisie, against the imperialist war' (355 et sqq.).

For **Trotsky** and for the evolving international communist movement, a central lesson of the Paris Commune and of the recent Russian revolutions was that the 'centralized party, internally welded by an iron discipline, linked intimately with the movement of the masses' cannot conquer power 'save on the condition of a powerful revolutionary pressure of the toiling masses. But in this act the element of preparation is entirely inevitable. The better the party will understand the C and the moment, the better the bases of resistance will be prepared, the better the force and the roles will be distributed, the surer will be the success and the less victims will it cost. The correlation of a carefully prepared action and a mass movement is the politico-strategical task of the taking of power' (1935, 45).

Following **Lenin**, **Brecht** understood dialectics as the 'practical teaching of alliances and the dissolution of alliances, the utilisation of transformations and the interconnection of transformations, of the organisation [*Bewerk-*

stelligung] of transformation and the transformation of the organiser [*Bewerksteller*]' (GW 12, 475). He included in the 'art of manoeuvring' (464) the insight that there are 'many conditions for the revolution [*Umsturz*]'. **Lenin** 'didn't recognise any time when it wasn't the time to work towards it' (476). It was always a case of taking up 'the best' out of the 'existing state of affairs', and assuming the 'best position', for if 'one doesn't pursue pleasure, [...] how else should one struggle?' (576).

4. **Gramsci**'s use of 'C' is certainly initially formed through the critique of a 'methodological error', which consists in 'failing to draw a distinction between what is "relatively permanent" and what is an "occasional fluctuation" when analyzing economic situations and social structures, a distinction that, to a certain extent, corresponds to the distinction between state and government, between strategy and tactics' (*Q* 4, § 38; *PN* 2, 184 et sq.).

4.1 **Gramsci** notes that *congiuntura* in Italian is understood as 'economic fluctuation', '[l]inked to very rapidly changing postwar phenomena', in such a way that the meaning of 'favorable or unfavorable [economic] opportunity [*occasione*]' remains associated with the word 'C'. The word thus signifies 'the ensemble of the immediate and transitory peculiarities of the economic situation'. 'The study of C, then, is more closely related to immediate politics, to "tactics" [and agitation], whereas "situation" is related to "strategy" and to propaganda' (*Q* 6, § 130; *PN* 3, 105). In a later note, he wrote: 'A C may be defined as the set of circumstances which determine the market in a given phase if these circumstances, however, are conceived of as in movement, in other words as an ensemble that gives rise to a process of ever new combinations, i.e., the process of the economic cycle. The C is studied to predict and thus also, within certain limits, to determine the economic cycle in such a way as to favour business. On that account, the C has also been defined as the oscillation of the economic situation, or as the set of oscillation' (*Q* 15, § 16). If such fluctuations then transform 'even the [relatively] constant elements', then it is no longer a case of mere 'conjunctural crises', but 'the crisis becomes organic' (*Q* 8, § 216; *PN* 3, 366), or rather, the crisis is '"structural" and not conjunctural' (*Q* 14, § 57).

When he rewrites his notes, **Gramsci** makes not only stylistic corrections: while he had earlier distinguished between what is 'permanent' and what is 'occasional [*occasionale*]' (*Q* 4, § 38; *PN* 2, 184), a later version argues that 'it is necessary to distinguish organic movements (relatively permanent) from movements which may be termed "conjunctural" (and which appear as occasional, immediate, almost accidental)'. Following the argumentation of the earlier version, however, Gramsci writes that these 'conjunctural phenomena

too depend on organic movements [...], but they do not have any very far-reaching historical significance; they give rise to political criticism of a minor, day-to-day character, which has as its subject top political leaders and personalities with direct governmental responsibilities. Organic phenomena on the other hand give rise to socio-historical criticism, whose subject is wider social groupings beyond the public figures and beyond the top leaders' (*Q* 13, § 17).

4.2 The text immediately continues in a way that represents a break with the previous argumentation, and which opens up the possibility of a strategically more important understanding of C. Here, **Gramsci**'s central problem with the theory of hegemony emerges. These are historical blocks, power relations in civil society, passive revolutions, various transformations, and so forth – and his understanding of the molecular processes involved in these phenomena. Inspired by **Marx**'s *Pref 59*, **Gramsci** writes that it is 'on the terrain of the *occasionale*' that the 'antagonistic forces organise' and struggle over a 'new reality'. It is a struggle that 'in the immediate [instance] is developed in a series of ideological, religious, philosophical, political, and juridical polemics, whose concreteness can be estimated by the extent to which they are convincing, and shift the previously existing disposition of social forces' (*Q* 13, § 17). In this context there is also the question of 'whether the fundamental historical crises are directly determined by economic crises', which Gramsci answers negatively: 'they can simply create a terrain more favourable to the dissemination of certain modes of thought, and certain ways of posing and resolving questions involving the entire subsequent development of the life of the state' (ibid.). It seems that Gramsci's dual warning against 'ideologism', in which there is 'an exaggeration of the "voluntarist" and individual element', and against 'economism', contributed to this insight: 'A common error in historico-political analysis consists in [...] presenting causes as immediately operative which in fact only operate indirectly, or to asserting that the immediate causes are the only effective ones' (ibid.).

The distinction between 'organic' and '"conjunctural" or occasional movements and facts' must, according to **Gramsci**, be applied to 'all types of situations', though 'the dialectical nexus between the two categories of movement, and therefore of research, is hard to establish precisely' (ibid.). Gramsci comprehends the question of the relations of force as an 'aspect of the same problem'. 'Abstractly, this formulation explains nothing, or almost nothing, since it merely repeats twice over the fact which needs to be explained, once as a fact and once as an abstract law and an explanation. The theoretical error consists therefore in making what is a principle of research and interpretation into an "historical cause"' (ibid.). In order to avoid this theoretical error, Gram-

sci emphasises the differentiation of 'moments' or 'levels'. *First*, there are the structural conditions, which are 'objective, independent of human will', and which, he argues, echoing **Marx**'s *Pref 59*, 'can be measured with the systems of the exact or physical sciences', thus allowing the determination of 'whether in a particular society there exist the necessary and sufficient conditions for its transformation' (*Q* 13, § 17). *Second*, it is necessary to evaluate 'the degree of homogeneity, self-awareness, and organisation attained by the various social classes'. **Gramsci** then distinguishes between further 'moments', which 'combine and diverge in various ways': The 'solidarity of interests among all the members of a social class – but still in the purely economic field', and the transcending of this corporatism, in order to establish the 'hegemony of a fundamental social group over a series of subordinate groups'. Here, 'international relations intertwine with these internal relations of nation states, creating new, unique and historically concrete combinations' (ibid.). The life of the state thus appears as 'a continuous process of formation and superseding of unstable equilibria' (ibid.); 'the written constitution' is adapted to 'the varying of the political Cs' (*Q* 14, § 11). The *third* moment is the 'relation of military forces, which from time to time is directly decisive'. Gramsci distinguishes between the 'technical' and the 'politico-military' levels (*Q* 13, § 17), and refers to the concept of military science of the '"strategic C"; or, more precisely, the degree of strategic preparation of the theatre of struggle' (*Q* 9, § 40).

These 'methodological criteria' demonstrate themselves to be 'useful' when applied to the examination of 'concrete historical facts, such as the transformation, in increasingly long waves', in France from 1789 to 1870. For **Gramsci**, 'it is precisely the study of these "waves" of varying frequency which enables one to reconstruct the relations on the one hand between structure and superstructure, and on the other between the development of organic movement and conjunctural movement in the structure' (*Q* 13, § 17). If Gramsci appears here to return to a narrower meaning of C, the same note also contains an anti-reductionist understanding of it: he translates the 'question of the relations of force on their different levels' into the question of the 'conjunctural fluctuations of the totality of social relations of force, on whose terrain the passage takes place from the latter to political relations of force, and finally to the military relation, which is decisive' (ibid.). Herein lies Gramsci's most important contribution to the deployment of the concept of C.

5. C is one of the core concepts with which **Althusser** tries, starting from **Marx**'s *Capital* and **Lenin**'s political writings, to reconstruct a Marxist theory of history that could provide a theoretical basis for analysing the conditions of political practice. In his 'self-critique' (from 1966 onwards) he articulated philosophical

practice more closely with the Cs of class struggle. In his late writings on 'aleatory materialism', C is the key concept linked to politics through his reading of **Machiavelli**, which he had already begun in the early 1960s.

5.1 According to **Althusser**, **Lenin**'s interest in history was not like that of a historian, directed to a '*fait accompli*', but was primarily that of a 'revolutionary leader' who 'reflects on the present in the present, on the necessity to be achieved' (1969, 179). These strategic analyses of the possibilities opened up for revolutionary action by '"the current situation"' (178) or the 'current C' with its complex determinations were for **Althusser**, after his own Hegelian phase (cf. Althusser 1997), a materialist alternative to the Hegelian conception of history as a teleological process with a character of an expressive totality (1976, 181 et sq.; Althusser/**Balibar** 1970, 17 and 94–97). C is thus not just a 'foam' produced by history or its fluctuation around a teleological process inherent to it, but a characteristic feature of history (**Althusser** 1969, 178 et sq.).

The possibilities of revolutionary politics were based on the fact that the capitalist mode of production and its 'general' or 'fundamental contradiction' exist only as parts of a C and its other contradictions: 'Of course, the basic contradiction dominating the period [...] is active in all these "contradictions" and even in their "fusion". But, strictly speaking, it cannot be claimed that these "contradictions" and their "fusion" are merely the *pure phenomena* of the general contradiction. The "circumstances" and "currents" which achieve it are more than its phenomena pure and simple. They derive from the relations of production, which are, of course, one of the terms of the contradiction, but at the same time its *conditions of existence*; from the super-structures, instances which derive from it, but have their own consistency and effectivity' (1969, 100).

The 'general contradiction' did not alone determine the development of the social formation, but this development was overdetermined by different contradictions and other factors (1969, 99–101 and 200–2). **Marx** saw, due to the idea of a 'complex structured whole' (193–200), that the development of the contradictions of capitalism was '*inégal*' and was realised only 'in the structure of the real historical present: the present of the C' (**Althusser**/**Balibar** 1970, 106). Because history does not have any given telos, it can 'really [be] the object of a *practice*' (**Althusser** 1969, 204). If history is understood as an expressive totality, as 'simply the development of one single *essence* or original and simple substance' (202), then there cannot be a contradiction that dominates in any determinate C, into which politics could intervene. Thus, there can be no 'Hegelian politics' (204). Althusser does not claim that anything is possible in a given C; the different determinations of a C have unequal effects. A C always has a 'structure in dominance' and C and structure are not mutually exclusive

opposites. The 'general contradiction' for Althusser was, along with other contradictions, determinant in structuring Cs, present only through these Cs with their specific condensations and displacements (99; 178 et sq.; 205 et sq.).

5.2 Soon after *Reading Capital* and *For Marx*, **Althusser** presented a new definition of philosophy: 'philosophy is, in the last instance, class struggle in the field of theory' (1976, 58; cf. 1967/2003, 217). This new definition highlighted the articulation of historical-political and theoretical Cs. From the manuscripts published posthumously in the 1990s, it is clear that **Machiavelli** was the theoretician that had a crucial role for **Althusser** while developing his thinking about Cs. **Machiavelli** was 'the first thinker consciously, if not to think the concept of C, if not to make it the object of an abstract and systematic reflection, then at least consistently – in an insistent, extremely profound way – to think in the C: that is to say, in its concept of an aleatory, singular case' (1999, 18). The *Prince* was, beside **Lenin**'s political writings, a model for analysing a specific C and its features; **Machiavelli**'s interest was not to produce a general or universal theory of C, but rather, the question '*comment faire*?' (1982, 544). He does not think 'on' the C, but rather, 'in' the C: 'it is the C itself that negatively, yet objectively, poses the problem of Italian national unity' (1999, 18), the problem of the '*duration*' of the state (40). His book was itself an intervention into this C.

In his reworking of this manuscript in the 1980s, **Althusser** increasingly uses the new vocabulary of his "aleatory materialism" (while concepts like "dialectical materialism" and "dialectics" are not used anymore; cf. **Morfino** 2006, 15–17). This attempt to analyse history conjuncturally and connect "history" and "politics" reformulates **Althusser**'s old problematic in a new vocabulary. In his fragmentary manuscript *Le courant souterrain du matérialisme de la rencontre* (1982) it is not **Machiavelli** or **Lenin** who are under scrutiny, though the goal is similar to that of *Contradiction and Overdetermination* (1962) or *On the Materialist Dialectic* (1963): to understand history conjuncturally, to analyse the conjunctural conditions for political action, and to ask how a C is constituted, that is, how it 'takes hold' and takes on a 'form' (2006, 191). For **Althusser**, the "elements" or "atoms" (**Epicurus**) do not give expression to a structure, but the structure itself is constituted by an aleatory conjunction of its elements (192). **Althusser** understood his notes on the tradition of aleatory materialism as a 'prelude' (188) to reading **Marx**'s *Capital*. He insisted that, from the perspective of aleatory materialism, the capitalist mode of production was not a telos that is inscribed in the elements of this mode of production, predetermining their development. Only after the capitalist mode of production has been produced through the combination of elements that are not reducible to each other –

'the "*encounter*" between "the owners of money" and the proletarian stripped of everything but his labour-power' – is it possible to speak of the 'stable relationships and a necessity' or 'tendential laws' characteristic to this mode of production (197).

5.3 Though **Althusser**'s self-criticism increasingly emphasised the importance of the *interaction* between theory and practice, he never put forward any concrete conjunctural analyses concerning the relations between intellectuals and the masses or the *political-organisational* connections between Marxist science and philosophy in relation to the prevailing ideologies or senso comune. Thus, the effects of the possible changes in these relationships on philosophical-scientific institutions and practices themselves remained outside of Althusser's observational focus – despite critical remarks on the "petit-bourgeois" position of teachers of philosophy or other intellectuals (cf. 1971). Althusser's analyses of the political-historical positionings of theoretical practices in the Cs of social reality are indeed clearly more abstract – "more theoretical" – than the sensitive analyses in **Gramsci**'s *Prison Notebooks*. When **Althusser**, for instance, writes about "the class-struggle *in* theory" he does not reflect extensively on the kind of effects this could have on the material practices and institutions of philosophy or the sciences in a given C. In Althusser's analyses, Marxist intellectuals seem to remain philosophers or theoreticians who '*spontaneously* reproduce the division between intellectual and material work typical of the capitalist class society' (**Lahtinen** 2009, xvii).

6. Nicos **Poulantzas** continued to develop the concept of C from the perspective of political intervention. **Lenin** is also important for him because when he 'saw the Russian C as the weakest link in the chain of imperialism, he was seeing the effects of the unity of an ensemble of structures on the class struggle [...] Without this conception, Lenin would have remained at the Second International's economist interpretation of **Marx**, which is ultimately an economist theory of the strongest link' (1973, 97). Thus he 'returned to the authentic thought of Marx in producing the concept of C, equivalent to that of the "present moment" which is the *specific object* of political practice' (93). It is 'the *nodal point* where the contradictions of the various levels of a formation are condensed in the complex relations governed by over-determination and by their dislocation and uneven development' (41). It represents 'the ever-singular historical individuality of a formation' as well as 'the concrete situation of the *political class struggle*': 'the articulation and the index of dominance which characterize the structure of a social formation are reflected as a C at the level of political class struggle' (94).

For **Poulantzas**, the 'specific *objective*' of political practice is 'the state, i.e., institutionalised political power, which is the cohesive factor in a determinate social formation and the nodal point of its transformations' (93). According to him, a 'C appears in the form of the effects of the structures on the field of the practices concentrated, in their *unity, at the level of the political class struggle*. These limits regulate, as such, a play of possible variations of social forces, in short, the intervention of political practice, which is here the concentrated intervention of the field of practices on the structures. The effectiveness of the structure on the field of practices is thus itself limited by the intervention of political practice on the structure' (95).

After **Poulantzas** provided a 'concrete analysis' of the 'C of the class struggle leading to fascism' (1974, 57) and the accompanying crises of hegemony, dominant ideology and party-representation, he studied in his last book the C of 'authoritarian statism', formed by 'intensified state control over every sphere of socio-economic life combined with radical decline of the institutions of political democracy and with draconian and multiform curtailment of so-called "formal" liberties, whose reality is being discovered now that they are going overboard' (1978, 203 et sq.).

7. The specificity of every C and the criticism of the abstract schemas of historical development are important also for Georges **Labica**. Against the 'ideological montages' of 'diverse "Marxisms"', he posited the thesis that 'the science founded by **Marx** has no other object than historically specific objects' (1974, 61). There are no 'infarcts of the modes of production', since 'historical Cs are all and always specific, and that specificity is the case globally as well as on different levels of a structure' (1974, 75).

In his interpretation of the **Althusser**ian concept of C, Étienne **Balibar** states that 'conception of an overdetermined and under-determined causality immediately removes the traditional opposition of "structure" and "C" [...] because the reality of the structure is nothing but the unpredictable succession of Cs' (1996a, 115). In a foreword to the 1996 republication of **Althusser**'s *Pour Marx*, **Balibar** introduces the concept of *événement*, though not consistently, since he also still uses C: 'the idea of overdetermination has to be applied to the intelligibility of the *événement*', that is, 'to that which [...] **Althusser** calls the "C", the "present moment" of **Lenin**' (1996b, ix; cf. iv, xiv). If we try to conduct 'a practice that does not dissociate analysis of the statements produced and refined by philosophers from the analysis of the C in which they are destined to signify and to act' (**Lecourt** 2001, ix), it might be useful to ask if the *événement* (understood as an "*Ereignis*") clarifies the conjunctural understanding of history and politics, or if we might instead lose something with this change of concepts.

Does an emphasis upon *événement* give more weight to spontaneous happening, thus reducing our focus upon analysis?

Justin **Rosenberg** tries to develop a precise vocabulary: *historical C* is 'a space of time within which a particular combination (or conjunction) of causes exercises a predominant (causal or imaginative) influence over the course of events and production of ideas'; *conjunctural phenomena* 'are those arising specifically from that dominant combination'; *conjunctural change* 'refers to developments, shifts, alterations, and reconfigurations which, however dramatic or extensive they may be, nonetheless remain changes within the existing historical form of society'; and finally, *conjunctural analysis* 'is a form of historical explanation which seeks both to explain particular events and ideas, and to map the movement of a period as a whole, by relating them to the working out of a dominant combination of causes'. He points out that there is nothing distinctively Marxist about the idea of conjunctural analyses. 'What makes it Marxist' for him 'is the central explanatory role accorded to the organic tendencies of capitalist development'. On the other hand, 'what makes it conjunctural is that these organic tendencies are twice historicized: first by identifying their concrete character at a given stage of their historical development; and second, by locating their operation in the historically given circumstances of the time' (2005, 29 et sq.). However, this idea of mere 'locating' might run the danger of underplaying the analytical potentials of Marxist concepts for *analysing* 'the historically given circumstances'. – Alex **Callinicos** criticises **Rosenberg** for failing 'to distinguish between two kinds of intermediary analysis' that 'operate at different levels, respectively, that of a specific phase of capitalist development and that of a determinate historical moment – in other words, of epoch and C' (2005, 355). By understanding C as a mere temporal moment, however, **Callinicos** ends up excluding the possibility that the "epoch" itself has been formed "conjuncturally".

An opposition between C and structure can be found also in Wally **Seccombe**. In his comments on the **Brenner** debate concerning the rise of capitalism in different regions of Europe, he maintains that 'while different outcomes of class struggle may generate enduring divergences in regional social structures and economic development they will not necessarily do so. Opposite results in conjunctural struggles are rarely sufficient to account for persistent socioeconomic differences between regions in the long run'. Yet, he concedes that 'it is precisely because conjunctural differences in struggle outcomes do not normally eventuate in profound and enduring divergences between regions [...] that the instances when this does occur are historic' (1992, 250).

8. What Stuart **Hall** calls his 'own kind of conjunctural thinking' (2004, 205) – inspired by **Gramsci** – means facing the things as they exist, 'not as you'd like them to be, not as you think they were ten years ago, not as they're written about in the sacred texts, but as they really are: the contradictory, stony ground of the present C' (1989, 151). He is most of all interested in 'what [...] the circumstances [are] in which we now find ourselves, how did they arise, what forces are sustaining them and what forces are available to us to change them?' (2007, 278 et sq.).

8.1 **Hall**'s attempt to study the complex political, cultural and economic determinations of current Cs of social struggles as well as his aim of producing politically relevant analyses differentiates him from economistic understandings of Marxism that cannot grasp the 'condensation' of the contradictions that are 'moving according to very different tempos' in the 'particular historical moment' that 'defines a C' (1979, 14). Like **Gramsci**, **Hall** focuses on 'the forces which form the basis of a "conjunctural" terrain of struggle' (1980, 165) where 'it is critical to get the relationship between the "organic" and the "conjunctural" features right'. To avoid 'presenting [structural, organic] causes as immediately operative' or 'asserting that the immediate causes are the only effective ones' (166), conjunctural analysis must focus on the conditions of strategic political action. According to Hall, 'what is "scientific" about the Marxist theory of politics is that it seeks to understand the limits to political action given by the terrain on which it operates. This terrain is defined, not by forces we can predict with the certainty of natural science, but by the existing balance of social forces, the specific nature of the concrete C. It is "scientific" because it understands itself as determinate; and because it seeks to develop a practice which is theoretically informed. But it is *not* "scientific" in the sense that political outcomes and the consequences of the conduct of political struggles are foreordained in the economic stars' (1983, 83 et sq.).

8.2 **Hall**'s conjunctural analyses focused on Thatcherism and its continuation in new forms in Blairism. His notion of 'authoritarian populism' emerged in 1978 after reading **Poulantzas**'s last book, asking what is 'particular and specific to *this* historical C' (1979, 14), which led him to predict the triumph of Thatcherism. According to Poulantzas, 'authoritarian statism exists in the form of regimes that vary according to the C of the country concerned' (1978, 204). With 'authoritarian populism', **Hall** tried 'to encapsulate the contradictory features of the emerging C: a movement towards a dominative and "authoritarian" form of democratic class politics – paradoxically, apparently rooted in the "transformism" (**Gramsci**'s term) of populist discontents' (1988, 153). For **Hall**,

'authoritarian populism' is 'an attempt to characterize certain strategic shifts in the political/ideological C. Essentially, it refers to changes in the "balance of forces"' (1988, 154). In this sense, the '**Blair** project, in its overall analysis and key assumptions, is still essentially framed by and moving on a terrain defined by Thatcherism' (1998, 14).

8.3 **Hall**'s methodological understanding of C is marked by his reading – inspired by **Althusser** – of **Marx**'s foreword to the *Grundrisse*: 'In the **Althusser**ian sense, production not only "determines" in the last instance, but determines the form of the combination of forces and relations which make a mode of production a complex structure. Formally, production specifies the system of similarities and differences, the points of C, between all the instances of the mode, including which level is, at any moment of a C, "in dominance"' (**Hall** 1974/2003, 128). When analysing a 'present C', according to a later interview from 2007, one has to 'break into it' with 'concepts, ideas and thoughts' and then 'come back to the surface of a situation or C one is trying to explain' (277). Thus 'you need to return to the problem you really wanted to solve, but now understanding that it is the product of "many determinations", not of one: not of a singular logic unfolding through history' (278). When working on analysis of materials, 'thinking conjuncturally involves "clustering" or assembling elements into a formation. However, there is no simple unity, no single "movement" here, evolving teleologically' (2006, 3). This does not mean 'that Cs are all that we can study'; yet his own theoretical work 'is always connected to the specifics of a concrete moment' and 'cultural studies [...] can only really work by moving from historical C to historical C' (cited in **Grossberg** 2006, 5 et sq.). 'I am a radical conjuncturalist in this sense that I think [that], when the C shifts, everything shifts. Politics doesn't disappear. Culture doesn't disappear. But the way in which culture is articulated with the economic, and the way in which that is expressed in the political – all of that changes' (cited in **MacCabe** 2008, 42).

Francis **Mulhern** (2000, 128) objects that 'in **Hall**'s usage, the conjunctural achieves clear, constant priority over the organic', and that he even 'assimilates the concrete to the conjunctural, in opposition to the organic'. Thus 'he effectively suspends the operation of the "relatively permanent" aspects of historical situations' and supports a 'voluntarist appreciation of historical processes'. Against this, **Mulhern** himself conceives of C as 'a moment in the longer organic life of a social formation, which is no less concrete for being more extensive in time' (2000, 128). Mulhern's critique does not recognise, however, that "radical conjuncturalism" also aims above all to explain the existing state of affairs, instead of presupposing it. As Lawrence **Grossberg** explains, it is a

case of 'a description of a social formation as fractured and conflictual, along multiple axes, planes and scales, constantly in search of temporary balances or structural stabilities' (2007, 107). It is precisely such a 'conjunctural mode of knowledge' that 'can be most usefully and concretely articulated to political struggles' (2006, 5).

9. In summary, an analytical distinction between three main uses of 'C' in various Marxist theories can be made. In the first usage, the "structure" is an essence and the C is only a superficial phenomenon. In the second usage, C is interpreted as a punctual moment of historical development. Here, what is problematic is the narrow, common-sense conception of the C, borrowed from economic discourse. The way C functions here is more-or-less as a descriptive concept that designates a certain historical moment and the relations of force prevailing in it, without, however, thematising the historical formation and structuration of these relations on various levels. Indeed, as we can see in the examples above, when C is conceived solely in opposition to the structure, as its surface or punctual state, the formation and changing of the structure itself either falls easily out of analytical focus, or becomes a theoretical anomaly, that is to say its formation is not problematised as an historical C of different structural elements irreducible to each other. In this kind of dichotomy between C and structure, the C remains descriptive and the latter spontaneously evolves into a fetish. This tends to leave open a backdoor, through which different spontaneous deterministic philosophies of history creep into Marxism, transforming it into evolutionism. This is avoided in the third conception with its "conjunctural" understanding of structure and its changes, allowing us to talk about "structural C". The focus here is not on the dichotomy of the "surface" versus "essence"; rather, C refers to the complex formation of an historical moment. In developing intervening [*eingreifend*] Marxist analyses, however, C cannot function as a new "conceptual dictator", but only as one among the many Marxist concepts that can help to analyse the many determinations of concrete reality, and thus open up new possibilities for political interventions. If this living connection to other conceptual tools is lost, one ends up with a "conjuncturalism" that dissolves everything into C.

Juha Koivisto and Mikko Lahtinen
Translated by Peter Thomas

Bibliography

L. **Althusser**, 'The Historical Task of Marxist Philosophy', *The Humanist Controversy and Other Writings* (1966–7), London-New York 2003.

L. **Althusser**, *For Marx*, London 1969.

L. **Althusser**, 'Philosophy as a Revolutionary Weapon', *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, New York-London 1971.

L. **Althusser**, *Essays in Self-Criticism*, London 1976.

L. **Althusser**, 'Le courant souterrain du matérialisme de la rencontre', *Écrits philosophiques et politiques*, ed. F. Matheron, Vol. 1, Paris 1982.

L. **Althusser**, *Early Writings*, London 1997.

L. **Althusser**, *Machiavelli and Us*, London 1999.

L. **Althusser**, *Philosophy of the Encounter: Later Writings* (1978–1987), London 2006.

L. **Althusser**, E. **Balibar**, *Reading Capital*, London 1970.

E. **Balibar**, 'Structural Causality, Over-determination, and Antagonism', *Postmodern Materialism and the Future of Marxist Theory: Essays in the Althusserian Tradition*, ed. A. Callari, D.F. Ruccio, Hanover-London 1996.

E. **Balibar**, 'Avant-propos pour la réédition de 1996', L. Althusser, *Pour Marx*, Paris 1996, i–xiv.

A. **Callinicos**, 'Epoch and Conjuncture in Marxist Political Economy', *International Politics*, vol. 42, 2005, no. 3, 353–63.

E. **Garin**, *Astrology in the Renaissance*, London 1983.

L. **Grossberg**, 'Does Cultural Studies Have Futures? Should it? (Or What's the Matter with New York?)', *Cultural Studies*, vol. 20, 2006, no. 1, 1–32.

L. **Grossberg**, 'Stuart Hall on Race and Racism: Cultural Studies and the Practice of Contextualism', *Culture and Politics, Race and Diaspora: The Thought of Stuart Hall*, ed. B. Meeks, Kingston-London 2007, 98–119.

S. **Hall**, 'Marx's Notes on Method: A "Reading" of the "1857 Introduction"' [1974], *Cultural Studies*, vol. 17, 2003, no. 2, 113–49.

S. **Hall** et al., *Policing the Crisis*, London 1978.

S. **Hall**, 'The Great Moving Right Show', *Marxism Today*, 1979, no. 1, 14–20.

S. **Hall**, 'Popular-Democratic vs. Authoritarian Populism: Two Ways of "Taking Democracy Seriously"', *Marxism and Democracy*, ed. A. Hunt, London 1980.

S. **Hall**, 'The Problem of Ideology – Marxism without Guarantees', *Marx: A Hundred Years On*, London 1983.

S. **Hall**, *The Hard Road to Renewal: Thatcherism and the Crisis of the Left*, London 1988.

S. **Hall** et al., 'Then and Now: A Re-evaluation of the New Left', *Out of Apathy: Voices of the New Left Thirty Years On*, ed. R. Archer et al., London 1989, 143–70.

S. **Hall**, 'The Great Moving Nowhere Show', *Marxism Today*, November/December 1998, 9–14.

S. **Hall**, 'In Conversation with Stuart Hall', H. Davis, *Understanding Stuart Hall*, London 2004, 193–205.
S. **Hall**, 'Black Diaspora Artists in Britain: Three "Moments" in Post-war History', *History Workshop Journal*, no. 61, 2006, 1–24.
S. **Hall**, 'Epilogue: Through the Prism of an Intellectual Life', *Culture, Race, Politics and Diaspora: The Thought of Stuart Hall*, ed. B. Meeks, Kingston-London 2007, 269–91.
G. **Labica**, 'Marxisme et spécificité: Sur quelques rappels théoriques à propos de la transition', *La Pensée* 177, 1974, 59–76.
M. **Lahtinen**, *Politics and Philosophy: Niccolo Machiavelli and Louis Althusser's Aleatory Materialism*, Amsterdam 2009.
D. **Lecourt**, *The Mediocracy: French Philosophy Since the Mid-1970s*, London-New York 2001.
C. **MacCabe**, 'An Interview with Stuart Hall, December 2007', *Critical Quarterly*, vol. 50, 2008, no. 1–2, 12–42.
N. **Machiavelli**, *The Prince*, ed. Q. Skinner, R. Price, Cambridge 1988.
V. **Morfino**, 'Il primato dell'incontro sulla forma', *Giornate di studio sul pensiero di Louis Althusser*, ed. A. Boito, M. Turchetto, Milan 2006.
F. **Mulhern**, *Culture/Metaculture*, London 2000.
N. **Poulantzas**, *Political Power and Social Classes* [1968], London 1973.
N. **Poulantzas**, *Fascism and Dictatorship* [1970], London 1974.
N. **Poulantzas**, *State, Power, Socialism*, London 1978.
J. **Rosenberg**, 'Globalization Theory: A Post Mortem', *International Politics*, vol. 42 2005, no. 1, 2–74.
W. **Seccombe**, *A Millennium of Family Change: Feudalism to Capitalism in Northwestern Europe*, London 1992.
L. **Trotsky**, 'Lessons of the Paris Commune' [1921], *New International*, vol. 2, March 1935, no. 2, 43–47.
G.B. **Vico**, *New Science*, transl. D. Marsh, Harmondsworth 1999.

→ abstract/concrete, accident, Althusserianism, appearance/form of appearance, articulation, base, capacity to act, contingency, culturalism, derivation, determination, determinism, development, dialectics, discourse-analysis, economism, element, elementary form, ensemble of social relations, essence/appearance, evolutionism, expression, fatalism, individuality, intervening thought, long waves, overdetermination, particular, relations of force, simple/complex, strategy/tactics, structure, surface, unity, universal

→ Ableitung, abstrakt/konkret, Althusser-Schule, Artikulation/Gliederung, Ausdruck, Basis, Bestimmung/Determination, Determinismus, Dialektik, Dis-

kursanalyse, einfach/komplex, eingreifendes Denken, Einheit, Einzelnes/Besonderes/Allgemeines, Element, Elementarform, Ensemble der gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse, Entwicklung, Erscheinung/Erscheinungsform, Evolutionismus, Fatalismus, Handlungsfähigkeit, Kontingenz, Kräfteverhältnis, kulturelle Wende, Lange Wellen der Konjunktur, Oberfläche, Ökonomismus, Strategie/Taktik, Struktur, Überdetermination, Wesen/Erscheinung, Zufall

CHAPTER 8

Critique of Globalisation

A: naqd al-ʿawlama. – F: critique de la mondialisation (globalisation). – G: Globalisierungskritik. – R: kritika globalizacii. – S: crítica de la globalización. – C: quánqiúhuà pīpàn 全球化批判

Just as the concept of G combines meaningful diagnoses of the times with elements of ideological domination, the CG is also an analytical category and at the same time an element of debate. Initially used by those who had a practical interest in developments, as well as intellectual proponents thereof, to dismiss criticism as "unrealistic" and "unreasonable", its rapid spread since the end of the 1990s has been the expression of an increasing *practical* critique of neoliberal G. The latter in fact itself creates the conditions for this, e.g. in the form of developments in communications (the internet). However, movements do not emerge from "objective" conditions, but establish themselves through the processes of politicisation and organising. They also take place beyond the public sphere, in some way providing the impetus which allows for critique and alternatives to "ferment". They are not critical or emancipatory per se, but their character depends on how the prevailing circumstances are interpreted.

1. A distinction can first be made between the analytical and political usage of the CG. The dominant version of the *analytical* CG understands G as primarily an economic process that is increasingly crisis-ridden. Here, reference is made to events such as the currency crises in Mexico (1994/95) and South-East Asia and Brazil (1997/98), as well as to the instability of international finance markets (**Krugman** 1999; **Soros** 1998). Others observe a more general 'crisis of governance' (**Zürn** 1998, 9–12). The negative consequences of G must be tackled: through international cooperation between states and civil society actors such as companies and NGOs, through the re-regulation of global capitalism, and through the harmonisation of the different sectors of society. Notional usage is made of Karl **Polanyi**'s concept of *embeddedness* (1944). Conceptually and normatively, this position is represented in the debate on 'global governance' (**CGG** 1995; **Rosenau** 1995; but cf. **Brand** et al. 2000) as well as in the debate over the supply of adequate global public goods (**Reinicke** 1998). Economic G, considered to be the "core", is left unquestioned; the state is understood to be a (potential) expression of the public interest, while power relations and relations of domination are largely ignored.

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_009
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

For critics of state power – and especially Marxists – G is understood as a metaphor for large-scale changes in social relations, whereby the state is decisively involved in the implementation of neoliberalism (**Hirsch** 1995; **Scherrer** 1999). Gender-specific aspects of this transformation also come into view (**Gibson-Graham** 1996; **Brenssell/Habermann** 2001). The central importance of international politics lies less in managing or avoiding crises than in safeguarding the neoliberal project worldwide. Stephen **Gill** here coined the term 'neoliberal constitutionalism', which essentially consists in securing internationally the bourgeois system of property (2000, 42 et sqq.). Other works refer to 'disembedding mechanisms' and the manifold 'limits of G' (**Altvater/Mahnkopf** 1996, 112–44, 503–90). World-systems theory criticises an 'unchecked G' that follows a post-war 'controlled' one, driving the polarisation between centre and periphery and leading to the decline of capitalism (**Amin** 1997, 89 et sqq.). Left-Keynesian approaches are also critical of state power, but with a limited understanding of the state. The state is seen here more as a victim of G, needing to be strengthened again (**Bourdieu** 2003). What is demanded is an internationalisation of Keynesian policies, i.e. employment and social policy (**Holland** 1994; **Martin/Schumann** 1997).

The French Nouvelle Droite is exemplary of the CG from the political right (**de Benoist/Champetier** 2012). Liberal G is here equated with Westernisation and standardisation, which threatens 'a collective and historical identity' and leads to uprooting. The central assumption of the analysis is that differences between peoples are 'the very substance of social life' (32), which must be recognised and maintained. The supposed solutions to the problem lie in protectionist-chauvinist ideas of communal living within small units, the suppression of the market, and the limitation or prevention of multi-ethnic cohabitation. Protectionist ideas (see **Brauner-Orthen** 2001, 74–87) are most likely to clash with emancipatory positions.

2. Central to the *practical* CG are protest movements, many of which initially emerged in local and national struggles. Traditional organisations such as trade unions or party-affiliated initiatives may also be part of the movement (**Moody** 1997). Criticism of neoliberalism is often a unifying theme – for example, in the 1995 strikes in France, or in trade union, peasant, and Indigenous movements (e.g. in South Korea, India, South Africa, Brazil, or Mexico), which resist forced structural adjustments, among other things. The international women's movement, in particular, was quick to link perspectives on protest with perspectives on organising, and international with national and local politics (**Ruf** 1998; **Wichterich** 2000).

Since the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) in 1998, one can speak of an *international protest movement*, in which a broad and analytically-

guided campaign led to massive criticism and the ultimate failure of the agreement (**George** 1999; **Wahl** 1998). Criticism of the MAI was able to be politicised because there were also conflicts within the group of dominant countries (between the USA and the EU). An earlier point of reference for parts of the movement is the 1994 Zapatista uprising (**Haug** 1999, 149 et sqq.; **Brand/Ceceña** 2000) and the 'First Intercontinental Encounter for Humanity and Against Neoliberalism' held in the summer of 1996 in Chiapas, Mexico (**Redaktion** 1997). Slogans used today such as "Ya basta!" (enough is enough) or "Another world is possible!" come from the Zapatistas. International demonstrations such as those which took place at the WTO meeting in Seattle at the end of 1999 (**Mies** 2001, 24 et sqq.), or at the summit of the heads of state of the G8 (the seven richest industrialised countries – the G7 – plus Russia) in Genoa in mid-2001, are focal points for a heterogeneous and diverse movement whose parts are anchored in local and national contexts (**iz3w** 2001).

At the broadest level, the practical CG addresses the *contradictions* of global capitalism. The focus is on deregulation and the associated dismantling of social rights as well as the further or re-commodification of social relations, e.g. through the privatisation of public enterprises, the restructuring of social welfare, or the "valorisation" of human and non-human nature. The widespread assessment is that globalised power relations must be fought globally. The limits of parliamentary democracy, which become evident not only in view of the internationalisation of social processes, are themselves blamed for the undemocratic implementation of the neoliberal project. Waging wars in the name of democracy and human rights has further delegitimised established forms of democracy. In contrast to its portrayal in the media, one of the movement's main concerns is to change and comprehensively democratise institutional and everyday practices as well as social values. Diversity, and internal, productive debate are seen as strengths rather than weaknesses. There is a broad consensus that non-violent direct action and civil disobedience are legitimate. The nationalist spectrum of the CG plays a subordinate role.

The international protest movement is characterised by a more adversarial style of politics, with the recognition that neoliberal G has been imposed from above through significant conflict. It thus reveals a vertical conflict structure, after neoliberal forces had succeeded in creating the perception that various societal interests were in horizontal conflict (regional competition) (**Revelli** 1999). In this way, this protest movement differs from the dominant form of left and left-liberal civil society politics in the 1990s, which heavily relied on cooperation with state actors and the utilisation of alternative expertise, and for which the inherently heterogeneous political practice of NGOs was typical (**Brand** et al. 2001). Critical NGOs are also important for the newer movements

because they contribute to opening up the dominant political processes, and their expertise is important in political disputes; this kind of "movement infrastructure" is one the protest movement is often dependent on. At the same time, however, the often successful co-opting of many NGOs by the state and corporations has become obvious.

Some *differences* on the theoretical-analytical level are reflected – to some extent – in the spectrum of the CG itself, especially in the understanding of politics and the state. Part of the international protest movement focuses attention on the 'independence of financial markets' (**Ramonet** 1997; www.attac.org). Accordingly, international state cooperation, and appropriate mechanisms such as the taxation of financial transactions (the so-called Tobin tax), should be used to combat such independence. The predominant view is that state intervention promises a relatively crisis-free functioning of capitalism. Pierre **Bourdieu** (2003) advocates for the development of a European welfare state to counter a neoliberalism which is opposed to social policies. The state is dichotomously contrasted with the market. Neglecting its colonial past and neocolonial present, Europe is stylised as a positive role model, and one which counters the USA. At the same time, however, Bourdieu makes it clear that anti-hegemonic practices require movements and intellectuals to relate more strongly to each other (www.raisons.org; a precondition for the success of neoliberalism was its intellectual networks).

Other parts focus on international networking and the exchange of ideas. The struggles in southern countries in particular should receive stronger support at an international level. The "Peoples' Global Action" network (https://www.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/agp/en/index.htm) was founded in 1997 with this intention and provides a central hub for each of the international protest events. The Italian "Tute Bianche" (White Overalls) also play an important role in the search for radical positions and new forms of political struggle (**Azzellini** 2001). A radical critique of the state predominates here, one that understands the state as interwoven with other power relations. In the radical political spectrum, efforts to formulate practical critiques of capitalism under the conditions of neoliberal G are strongest. Another part of the movement, especially that associated with the church, acts out of a moral imperative. Here, the focus is particularly on raising awareness of mounting social problems and associated developments. Outrage directed at the increasingly shameless enforcement of neoliberal policies is also an important driver (**Mies** 2001; **Klein** 2000). According to their experiences, the southern sections of the protest movement more strongly emphasise the role of open violence and externally-imposed structural adjustments in the wake of the debt crisis, which proved to be a central lever of neoliberal policies (**WEED** 1999).

A central prerequisite for the establishment of an international protest movement is the possibility of fast and relatively cheap communication. Within a very short time, a dense network of alternative communication has formed, in which not only does the exchange of information take place, but also processes of clarification and organisation. Nevertheless, many effects only unfold through the bourgeois public sphere; here the social legitimacy – of both the issues and forms of action – is contested and the ruling hegemony is called into question. Dissident voices from the establishment also play a large role. One danger is in confusing short-term media victories with lasting changes to the balance of power.

3. Theoretical references to **Marx** and Marxist approaches exist only in parts of the CG. For example, reference is made to regulation theory and world-systems theory. The historical materialist theory of the state plays a certain role in the more radical political spectrum in order to resolve the problematic dichotomy of "the state as an instrument of the ruling class" versus "the state as a potential expression of the common good". There is also a relatively strong theoretical understanding, based on **Gramsci**, of hegemonic domination and politics. The radical parts of the movement are most likely to refer to a Marxist understanding of communism, which is universalist (not in the white male, Western sense) in that it aims for the liberation of all people. Communism, many activists would agree, is 'the *real* movement which abolishes the present state of things. The conditions of this movement result from the now existing premise' (MECW 5/49 [MEW 3/35]).

Nevertheless, explicit references to **Marx** seldom occur. On the one hand, this is related to the discrediting of ML by authoritarian socialism and its state ideology. The Mexican Zapatistas are an outstanding example of how critical and emancipatory movements seek out a new language (**Huffschmid** 2000). However, this is also related in part to the theoretical shortcomings of a movement which is still in the process of establishing itself.

4. Since the protests in Seattle at the end of 1999, it has become clear that the dominant state and media approach to the movements consists of division, delegitimisation, and repression. Attempts to co-opt the "good" parts of the movement – as well as repression of the more radical elements – are increasing (**BUKO** 2001). With the attacks in the USA on 11 September 2001, the conditions of radical critique and emancipatory protest have shifted in several respects. Firstly, the public debates, and the "attention economy", are less directed towards emancipatory and socio-critical approaches. Secondly, the inevitable "war on terror" has been quickly extended to other forms of oppositional

action, including those with emancipatory aims. The so-called "international community" has to some extent turned its forces of oppression inwards, and rule-of-law achievements are being dismantled; this had already been on the agenda in Genoa (1999) and gained new momentum after the attacks. Thirdly, it is to be expected that there will be more intensive forms of military and police cooperation between northern states. Alongside a neoliberal constitutionalism, the monopoly on violence will also become more internationalised in the sense of a '*monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force*' (**M. Weber**, *FMW*, 78) in the ruling societies. Finally, when it comes to political disputes, it is important that the central axis of conflict, through which conflicting interests are interpreted, is again "horizontalist": in addition to the horizontal level of regional competition, general interests are constructed through the dichotomy of "good" versus "evil", or "civilisation" versus the "other" in the sense of a 'clash of civilisations' (**Huntington** 1996). The terms "terrorist" and "supportive environment" – terms largely defined by the powers that be – can be used to foist certain attributes upon weaker actors. Whether this will be successful and what opposition this situation will generate are open questions. In contrast, even liberal positions point to indirect connections between the attacks, the fragmenting consequences of G and the accompanying frustrations of many people, and the policies of metropolitan states (**Sachs** 2001). At its core is the fact that the new world order, with the USA unequivocally dominant militarily and economically, provides neither political leadership nor material concessions to those it rules over in the southern countries. The neoliberal model itself makes such leadership and any associated development model difficult (**Hirsch** 2001).

It is necessary for an emancipatory left to develop a critical position with regard to terror *and* the prevailing circumstances, and to establish numerous connecting lines between the various developments. It will be all the more urgent to strengthen critical reflection with regard to circumstances as well as the movements themselves (**Chesnais** et al. 2001). Whether neoliberal constitutionalism can be countered by a democratic and human rights-based constitutionalism will be decided not only at the international level, but in debates about changing institutional and everyday practices and values in all areas of society, both public and private. Nevertheless, the great value of the movement is that it shows the possibility of global alternatives.

Ulrich Brand
Translated by Eric-John Russell

Bibliography

E. **Altvater**, B. **Mahnkopf**, *Grenzen der Globalisierung*, Münster 1996.

S. **Amin**, *Die Zukunft des Weltsystems* (1996), Hamburg 1997.

D. **Azzellini**, 'Tute Bianche: Weiße Overalls im zivilen Ungehorsam', *analyse & kritik*, vol. 31, no. 453, August 2001, 10.

A. **de Benoist**, C. **Champetier** (1999), *Manifesto for a European Renaissance*, London 2012.

P. **Bourdieu**, *Acts of Resistance: Against the Tyranny of the Market*, New York 1998.

U. **Brand** et al., *Global Governance: Alternative zur neoliberalen Globalisierung?* Münster 2000.

U. **Brand**, A.E. **Ceceña** (eds.), *Reflexionen einer Rebellion: 'Chiapas' und ein anderes Politikverständnis*, Münster 2000.

U. **Brand** et al. (eds.), *Nichtregierungsorganisationen in der Transformation des Staates*, Münster 2001.

A. **Brauner-Orthen**, *Die Neue Rechte in Deutschland*, Opladen 2001.

A. **Brenssell** and F. **Habermann**, 'Von Keksen und Kapitalismus: Intervention gegen "männlichen" Universalismus in Theorien zum Neoliberalismus', *Ein neuer Kapitalismus?* M. Candeias and F. Deppe (eds.), Hamburg 2001, 241–64.

BUKO – Bundeskongress entwicklungspolitischer Aktionsgruppen, 'Globalisierungskritik, Genua, Gewalt', *analyse & kritik*, vol. 31, no. 453, August 2001, 8–9.

CGG – Commission on Global Governance, *Our Global Neighbourhood: The Report of the Commission on Global Governance*, Oxford 1995.

F. **Chesnais**, C. **Serfati**, C.-A. **Udry**, *Die Zukunft der 'Anti-Globalisierungs'-Bewegung*, Zurich 2001.

S. **George**, *The Lugano Report: On Preserving Capitalism in the Twenty-first Century*, London 1999.

J.K. **Gibson-Graham**, *The End of Capitalism (As We Knew It): A Feminist Critique of Political Economy*, Cambridge (MA) 1996.

S. **Gill**, 'Theoretische Grundlagen einer neo-gramscianischen Analyse der europäischen Integration', *Die Konfiguration Europas*, H.J. Bieling, J. Steinhilber (eds.), Münster 2000, 23–50.

W.F. **Haug**, *Politisch richtig oder richtig politisch*, Hamburg 1999.

J. **Hirsch**, *Der nationale Wettbewerbsstaat*, Berlin 1995.

J. **Hirsch**, 'Globalisierung und Terrorismus', www.links-netz.de 2001.

S. **Holland**, *Towards a New Bretton Woods: Alternatives for the Global Economy*, Nottingham 1994.

A. **Huffschmid**, 'Spinnen im Netz: Zapatismus als Maskerade und paradoxe Politik', Brand/Ceceña 2000, 136–77.

S.P. **Huntington**, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, New York 1996.

iz3w – Informationszentrum 3. Welt (ed.), *Gegenverkehr: Soziale Bewegungen im globalen Kapitalismus*, Freiburg 2001.

N. **Klein**, *No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies*, London 2000.

P. **Krugman**, *The Return of Depression Economics*, New York 1999.

H.P. **Martin**, H. **Schumann**, *The Global Trap: Globalization and the Assault on Prosperity and Democracy* (1996), London 1997.

M. **Mies**, *Globalisierung von unten*, Hamburg 2001.

K. **Moody**, *Workers in a Lean World: Unions in the International Economy*, London-New York 1997.

K. **Polanyi**, *The Great Transformation* (1944), Boston 2001.

I. **Ramonet**, 'Disarming the Markets', *Le Monde Diplomatique*, December 1997, 1.

REDaktion (ed.), *Chiapas und die Internationale der Hoffnung*, Cologne 1997.

W.H. **Reinicke**, *Global Public Policy: Governing without Government?*, Washington 1998.

M. **Revelli**, *Die gesellschaftliche Linke*, Münster 1999.

J.N. **Rosenau**, 'Governance in the Twenty-First Century', *Global Governance*, vol. 1, no. 1, 1995, 13–43.

A. **Ruf**, 'Frauennetzwerke im Spannungsfeld von Globalisierung und Vielfalt', *Globalisierung aus Frauensicht*, R. Klingebiel, S. Randeria (eds.), Bonn 1998, 66–84.

J. **Sachs**, 'Amerika muss die Augen öffnen', *Die Zeit*, vol. 56, no. 40, 27 September 2001, 21.

C. **Scherrer**, *Globalisierung wider Willen? Die Durchsetzung liberaler Außenwirtschaftspolitik in den USA*, Berlin 1999.

G. **Soros**, *The Crisis of Global Capitalism: Open Society Endangered*, New York 1998.

P. **Wahl**, 'NGO-Multis, McGreenpeace und der Netzwerk-Guerilla', *Peripherie*, vol. 18, no. 71, 1998, 55–68.

WEED – World Economy, Ecology & Development (ed.), *Der Schuldenreport: Auswege aus der Schuldenkrise der Entwicklungsländer*, Bonn 1999.

C. **Wichterich**, 'Strategische Verschwisterung, multiple Feminismen und die Glokalisierung von Frauenbewegungen', *Frauenbewegungen weltweit*, I. Lenz, M. Mae, K. Klose (eds.), Opladen 2000, 257–80.

M. **Zürn**, *Regieren jenseits des Nationalstaates*, Frankfurt/M 1998.

→ blocs, capital, casino capitalism, civil society, commodification, counterpublic, critique, debt crisis, disembedding, emancipation, European integration, finance capital, financial crisis, financial markets, globalisation, hegemony, high-tech mode of production, ideology, international political economy, internet, nation state, neocolonialism, neoliberalism, non-governmental organisations, oppression, polarisation, politics, power relations, regulationism, terrorism, trade, transnational corporation, violence, world-system, Zapatismo

→ Blöcke, Emanzipation, Entbettung, europäische Integration, Finanzkapital, Finanzkrise, Finanzmärkte, Gegenöffentlichkeit, Gewalt, Globalisierung, Handel, Hegemonie, hochtechnologische Produktionsweise, Ideologie, internationale politische Ökonomie, Internet, Kapital, Kasino-Kapitalismus, Kommodifizierung, Kräfteverhältnisse, Kritik, Nationalstaat, Neokolonialismus, Neoliberalismus, Nichtregierungsorganisationen, Polarisierung, Politik, Regulationismus, Schuldenkrise, Unterdrückung, Terrorismus, transnationale Konzerne, Weltmarkt, Weltsystem, Zapatismus, Zivilgesellschaft

CHAPTER 9

Dependency Theory

A: naẓarīya at-tabʿīya. – F: théorie de la dependance. – G: Dependenztheorie. – R: teorija zavisimogo razvitija. – S: teoría de la dependencia. – C: yīlài lǐlùn 依赖理论

DT became known during the late 1950s and throughout the 1960s as the most important foundation for a radical theory of Third World development. It emerged as a neo-Marxist critique of liberal development theories, such as those represented by W.W. **Rostow** (1960), and of schematic Marxist views that tended to explain economic and social backwardness as stemming from a lack of capitalist development. Linked to DT is the widespread conviction that the social structure and politics of less-developed countries is primarily a question of their position in the international capitalist system and less related to "the interior" of their own societies. These countries find themselves with a "peripheral" status in relation to developed metropolises. This relationship of "periphery" and "centre", of "satellite" and metropolis, or *dependency*, must be broken. In the tradition of DT, scholars and governments from the Global South as well as developmental activists from the Global North are critical of the "dependent" status of developing countries.

A number of representatives of DT see themselves in the tradition of Marxist thought (cf. **Mandel** 1975). They refer to sources such as **Marx** and **Engels**'s writings on India, Ireland, and Poland (cf. MECW 12/217–22 [MEW 9/220–6]; *C I* 859–70 [23/730–40]; MECW 7/337–81 [MEW 5/319–63]) and to **Lenin**'s studies on the national and colonial question in imperialism (cf. *Imp*, CW [LW 22/265–75]). Early DT positions can be traced back to strategy papers of the UN Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA/CEPAL). These documents were published at the initiative of Argentine economist Raúl **Prebisch** (1950). The works of Paul A. **Baran** (1957), from the *MR* circle, also anticipated DT.

DT made its breakthrough in Santiago de Chile in the 1960s, when a number of Latin American economists, sociologists, and historians simultaneously established a new logically-coherent methodological approach to the problems of underdevelopment. The best known were Osvaldo **Sunkel**, Celso **Furtado** (1964), Fernando **Cardoso** and Enzo **Faletto** (1969), Theotônio **Dos Santos** (1969), and Ruy Mauro **Marini** (1969). DT received its most concise form through André Gunder **Frank** (1967), who had worked with the "dependistas" in Chile, and through Samir **Amin** (1974), who had been influenced by French

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_010
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

discussions, especially around François **Perroux** (1961) and Charles **Bettelheim** (1964). DT expanded to the Caribbean (**Rodney** 1972, also the works of Clive **Thomas**, Norman **Girvan**), to East Africa (**Shivji** 1970, **Leys** 1977, and also Justinian **Rweyemamu**), or rather was formed there independently. In India, a variant of DT already existed with Mahatma **Gandhi** and the Marxist M.N. **Roy** (1921).

In response to the controversial question of what DT intends to explain, **Frank** formulated three main theses: 1. The expansion of the capitalist system over the previous century had penetrated even the most isolated areas of the underdeveloped world. Therefore, underdevelopment is not reducible to the continued existence of pre-capitalist relations or to a shortage of capital. On the contrary, underdevelopment is generated precisely by the development of capitalism itself. 2. Countries with "dependent" or "peripheral" status experience their most significant economic development when their links to metropolitan areas are weakest. After capitalism in the metropolises re-establishes trade and investment links with the less-developed countries and fully integrates these countries into the world market, originary development and industrialisation is stifled or guided in a direction that blocks its own reproduction. 3. The regions that are most underdeveloped today and seem to be characterised as feudal had, in the past, the closest connections to the metropolises. Their early participation in the development of the capitalist world economy gave them a distorted socio-economic structure that prevented independent development. DT does not identify underdevelopment with backwardness and poverty. According to **Amin** (1974), it is defined by the following structural features: large productivity and income disparities exist between different sectors of the economy. Economic development is one-sided and characterised by disintegration due to the lack of a domestic sector producing industrial goods for mass consumption. The economy is heavily dependent on foreign markets and capital. The most obvious consequence of underdevelopment is the marginalisation of an ever-growing part of the population. The old socio-economic structures are being undermined through their integration into the capitalist global economy. The displaced people cannot be integrated by a new society based on self-sustaining national economic growth. Only a radical break with the capitalist global economy would make a policy of self-reliance and real development possible (cf. also **Nyerere** 1967). For **Amin**, China under **Mao** was the most prominent example of a successful development policy.

DT is closely related to theories of international exploitation. The outflow of surplus products from the economic periphery to the centre was already an important component of the studies of **Prebisch** and **Baran**. Thus, following **Prebisch**, the deterioration of the terms of trade for countries of the

Global South is considered evidence of "unfair commodity prices" upon which a South-North income transfer, or "unequal exchange", is based. This approach formed the starting point of all North-South analyses of DT. Arghiri **Emmanuel**'s 1969 theory of 'unequal exchange' emphasises that international exploitation causes disparities in development, rather than unequal development being the reason for different income outflows. For **Emmanuel**, wages in rich countries – which are extraordinarily high compared to the wages in poor countries, mostly acquired outside of any collective bargaining policies – cause a systematic and large transfer of income that reinforces inequalities within the global economy. To reduce this unequal exchange, poor countries should withdraw from trading with high-wage countries, diversify their economic structure, and form export cartels.

Forms of dependency and exploitation have changed over the history of global capitalism, although the structures have remained basically unchanged. The process of integrating the colonies within commodity exchange was followed by the unequal international division of labour between the industrialised countries and those producing raw materials. Direct territorial conquest was followed by more indirect, neocolonial domination. Transnational corporations became increasingly important actors in the maintenance and expansion of imperialist structures. For DT, a new unequal international division of labour became visible. For example, some countries specialise in industrial production that uses a lot of unskilled, low-paid, but also disciplined workers. A new form of dependency is becoming prevalent: technological dependency.

A particularly influential position of DT was the notion that participation in global trade would lead to a secular impoverishment of less-developed countries. At the beginning of the 1970s, the clearly rapidly-increasing difficulties of national development in a number of developing countries, including China, which were attempting to break from the global capitalist economy – coupled with the success of certain East Asian "emerging economies" in catching up with capitalist development – undermined the political attraction of the conclusions of DT. In this sense, also impactful was the experience, especially in Latin America, that "national" industrialisation through import substitution exacerbated social inequalities and problems with the balance of payments (cf. **Little**, **Scitovsky**, and **Scott** 1970). There was no systematic effort to distinguish the effects of transnational capital as a *sui generis* relation of production from those effects that emanated from the ruling political-economic regimes "on the ground" (in contrast, see **Morawetz** 1977, 40 et seq.). DT was subjected to extensive criticism and lost much academic support. It was accused of circular reasoning, fallacious inferences from empirical observation, as well as a

weak base in deductive theory (cf. **Booth** 1985, 762). By the end of the 1970s, DT found itself in a serious crisis (cf. **Spraos** 1983).

Ernesto **Laclau**'s article 'Feudalism and Capitalism in Latin America' (1971) was often seen as a first significant step beyond the dependency problematic. He demonstrated that **Frank**'s earlier work, with its concept of "capitalist world system", had confused the spheres of production and exchange and ultimately conceded causal primacy to circulation. Not only was this incompatible with **Marx**, for whom exchange is subordinate to the production process, but it also led to a theory of underdevelopment that had nothing to contribute to certain important aspects of the history of the modern era. Thus, since the 17th cent., the world economic system has been characterised by a combination of elements belonging to different modes of production. In this process, pre-capitalist relations of production are restructured, not eliminated, by the incursion of merchant capital. As an advocate of the "classical" presentation of capitalist development, Bill **Warren** took a position within Marxism that was radically opposed to DT. He examined the effects of colonialism and the post-colonial international system on the productive forces in developing countries and found that, since the Second World War, there has been a significant leap in the development of capitalist social relations and productive forces in the Third World. The policies of imperialist countries and their economic ties with underdeveloped countries ultimately promote industrialisation in the latter. In a context of growing economic interdependence, the bonds of dependency are loosening with the development of indigenous capitalism (Warren 1980, 9 et seq.). A theoretical survey of the original positions of DT also took place within the "dependistas" group.

DT has had a profound theoretical and political impact. It motivated the developmental optimism of the 1950s and 1960s and was the theoretical justification for the radical demands for a new world economic order. The continuous influence of DT can be seen in Fidel **Castro**'s report to the Seventh Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries (1983). Together with the French *Annales* school, DT led directly to the emergence of Immanuel **Wallerstein**'s influential concept of the world system (1974). For the Hungarian economist Tamás **Szentes**, the lasting contribution of DT is that it has laid out the following: the socio-economic situation of developing countries cannot be grasped by the term "economic development" alone. Their domestic situation is not a sign of failing to participate in development, nor of falling behind progress. Rather, it is precisely the result of a *special development* of the capitalist global economy (cf. Szentes 1971).

Jan Otto Andersson
Translated by Eric-John Russell

Bibliography

S. **Amin**, *Accumulation on a World Scale: A Critique of the Theory of Underdevelopment* (1970), New York 1974.

P. **Baran**, *The Political Economy of Growth*, New York 1957.

C. **Bettelheim**, *Planification et croissance accélérée*, Paris 1964.

D. **Booth**, 'Marxism and Development Sociology: Interpreting the Impasse', *World Development*, vol. 13, 1985, no. 7, 761–87.

F.H. **Cardoso** and E. **Faletto**, *Dependency and Development in Latin America* (1971), Berkeley 1979.

F. **Castro**, *The World Economic and Social Crisis: its impact on the underdeveloped countries, its somber prospects and the need to struggle if we are to survive: Report to the Seventh Summit Conference of Non-Aligned Countries*, Havana 1983.

H. **Dieterich**, *Produktionsverhältnisse in Lateinamerika. Inkareich, hispanoamerikanische Kolonisation und kapitalistische Entwicklung. Zur Kritik der Dependenztheorie*, Giessen 1977.

T. **Dos Santos**, 'El nuevo carácter de la dependencia', *La Crisis del Desarrollismo y la Nueva Dependencia*, ed. J. Matos Mar, Buenos Aires 1969.

A. **Emmanuel**, *Unequal Exchange: A Study of the Imperialism of Trade* (1969), New York 1972.

T.T. **Evers** and P.v. **Wogau**, '"dependencia": lateinamerikanische Beiträge zur Theorie der Unterentwicklung', *Argument* 79, vol. 15, 1973, 404–54.

A.G. **Frank**, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America*, New York 1967.

A.G. **Frank**, *Dependent Accumulation and Underdevelopment*, New York 1978.

C. **Furtado**, *Dialética do desenvolvimento*, Rio de Janeiro 1964.

A.G. **Frank**, *Accumulation and Development: The Logic of Industrial Civilization* (1978), New York 1983.

E. **Laclau**, 'Feudalism and Capitalism in Latin America', *New Left Review*, London 1971, 19–38.

C. **Leys**, 'Underdevelopment and Dependency: Critical Notes', *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, vol. 7, 1977, no. 1.

I.M.D. **Little**, T. **Scitovsky**, and M. **Scott**, *Industry and Trade in Some Developing Countries*, Oxford 1970.

E. **Mandel**, *Late Capitalism* (1972), London 1975.

R.M. **Marini**, *Subdesarrollo y Revolución*, Mexico City 1969.

D. **Morawetz**, *Twenty-Five Years of Economic Development: 1950–75*, Washington D.C. 1977.

J.K. **Nyerere**, 'Die Politik der Eigenständigkeit (Self-Reliance)' (1967), *Lernen von Afrika*, D. Cwienk and J.R. Klicker (eds.), Wuppertal 1982, 91–5.

F. **Perroux**, *L'économie du xxe siècle*, Paris 1961, 3rd abridged edition, 1969.

R. **Prebisch**, *The Economic Development of Latin America and its Principal Problems*, New York (United Nations) 1950.

V.G. **Rastjannikow**, 'Die Peripherie der kapitalistischen Weltwirtschaft. Widersprüche der Mehrsektorenwirtschaft und Strategie der sozialökonomischen Entwicklung', *Probleme kapitalistischer Entwicklung in Entwicklungsländern Asiens. Berichte der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin*, vol. 6, 1986, no. 4, 48–58.

W. **Rodney**, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, London 1972.

W.W. **Rostow**, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto*, Cambridge 1960.

M.N. **Roy**, *India in Transition* (1921), Bombay 1971.

I.G. **Shivji**, 'Tanzania – The Silent Class Struggle', *1st Annual Conference of the Provisional Council for the Social Sciences*, Dar es Salaam 1970.

J. **Smith**, *Imperialism in the Twenty-First Century*, New York 2016.

J. **Spraos**, *Inequalising Trade? A Study of Traditional North/South Specialisation in the Context of Terms of Trade Concepts*, Oxford 1983.

T. **Szentes**, *The Political Economy of Underdevelopment*, Budapest 1971.

I. **Wallerstein**, *The Modern World-System, vol. 1: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*, New York 1974.

B. **Warren**, *Imperialism: Pioneer of Capitalism*, London 1980.

→ anti-colonialism, articulation, centre/periphery, Chinese Revolution, colonialism, colonial mode of production, conditions of reproduction, decolonisation, decoupling, exchange, exploitation, global economy, imperialism, international division of labour, law of value, Maoism, marginalisation, metropolises, national liberation, nation state, neocolonialism, new world economic order, non-alignment, North-South conflict, post-Marxism, poverty/wealth, productive forces, Third World, transnational corporations, underdevelopment, unequal exchange, world market, world system

→ Abkopplung, Antikolonialismus, Armut/Reichtum, Artikulation, Ausbeutung, Blockfreiheit, chinesische Revolution, Dritte Welt, Entkolonialisierung, Imperialismus, internationale Arbeitsteilung, koloniale Produktionsweise, Kolonialismus, Maoismus, Marginalisierung, Metropolen, nationale Befreiung, Nationalstaat, Neokolonialismus, neue Weltwirtschaftsordnung, Nord-Süd-Konflikt, Postmarxismus, Produktivkräfte, Reproduktionsbedingungen, Tausch, transnationale Konzerne, ungleicher Tausch, Unterentwicklung, Weltmarkt, Weltsystem, Weltwirtschaft, Wertgesetz, Zentrum/Peripherie

CHAPTER 10

Development

A: tanmīya. – F: développement. – G: Entwicklung. – R: razvitie. – S: desarollo. – C: fāzhǎn 发展

D is an ambiguous term in everyday language: it can refer to movement, change, an "ascent from lower to higher", hence a "higher D", maturation, growth or improvement. D can also be understood in terms of an explanation or an elaboration. Ideas expressing an opposing meaning refer to an absence of D or the "eternal return of the same". Each idea – of D and the cycle without D – has a history that reaches back to antiquity. There are many sides to the complex traits of these ideas and they are inherently contradictory. The complexity revolves around the real or supposed motive powers of D, their objective-deterministic, natural law-like or supernatural, their subjectively and individually malleable or "iron" character, and finally around their measure, meaning and goal. D is about the creation of a novelty, with which a tendency in the "old" can perhaps be associated.

Kautsky propagated Marxism as a doctrine of economic D and placed it alongside Darwinism. **Engels** had a certain part in this trend. But even among the earliest generation of Marxists there was already a keen appreciation of historical materialism's "naturalistic" and "objectivistic" affliction. Antonio **Labriola** polemicised in 1895 against the representatives of this tendency as 'pseudo-Marxists': 'Or again, they try to bring back our materialistic conception of history into the theory of universal evolution which to the minds of many is but a new metaphor of a new metaphysics. Or again they seek in this doctrine a derivative of Darwinism' (1999, 8).

1. 'The world is change', so the terse sentence ascribed to **Democritus** goes (ὁ κόσμος ἀλλοίωσις, *Golden Sentences of* ***Democrates***, 84; cf. *DK*, fragment 115). Yet no developmental thought corresponds to this statement. An intuition as to why this remained excluded from the collective imaginary of Greek antiquity is given by **Hesiod**'s 'saga' (λόγος) of how the world came down through the ages (*Works and Days*, 106–200). Hesiod elaborates a mythical concept of the succession of ages, each experiencing abrupt changes for the worse until coming to the brink of final destruction. The ancient Greek concepts most likely to cross over into D's semantic field are γένεσις (**Marx** uses this concept in the analysis of the value-form where he reconstructs the 'genesis' of the 'Money

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_011
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

form'; cf. MECW 35/80 [MEW 23/62]), αὔξησις ('growth'), φθορά ('decline'), etc. D is a 'relatively new' (**Weyand** 1972, 550) translation of the Latin *explicatio*. *Explicatio* originally refers (quite like *evolutio*) to the laying out, uncoiling, or unravelling (of a yarn, mesh, or scroll). Metaphorically it refers to an exposition that is rhetorically conclusive (Georges). Explication of a text means to lay out (to one another) what is understood therein.

Where reality is understood textually and knowledge is directed towards "reading the Book of Nature" (as in **Leibniz**'s and Christian **Wolff**'s philosophy), *explicatio/D* can refer to the meaning of nature, person and society, and later lead from there to a causal explanation.

Leibniz (who often spoke of *involutio* versus *evolutio*, or rather *enveloppement* versus *développement*) did not yet see D as the genesis of something fundamentally new, but as the maturation of an already existing 'convoluted' form that brings forth clarity. Here D also means the becoming conscious of an unconscious idea ('petite perception' – 'toute confusion doit se développer'; cf. *Nouveau Essais*, 150 et sqq.).

In **Lessing** and **Herder**, D experienced a dramatic change in meaning. **Lessing**'s *Education of the Human Race* (1777/80) assumes, in the introduction, that religion is the 'process whereby the human understanding in all places can alone develop, and will develop further still'. The D concept stands under the aegis of education, through which the historical schema of civilisation is conceived. Humanity is taken on a journey, with religion as its instructor, from childhood to maturity. It is supposed to arrive at enlightened reason in the end, with no further need of religious pedagogy. Lessing wrote of the not-yet of this process as of a 'preparatory exercise […], *hints* and *allusions*' (§ 43). He defined hints as 'that which already contains any germ, out of which the, as yet, held back truth allows itself to be developed' (§ 46). Together with embellishment, style, allegories and so forth, these forms are good for children and yet become 'hurtful' when one abides with them for too long. The understanding ought to attain a 'perfect illumination' on a whole range of objects (§ 80). D appears here as the idea of the 'Way by which the human Race reaches its perfection' and which every individual, 'one sooner, another later', must 'have travelled over' (§ 93).

D has a universal status in **Herder**'s *Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man* (1784/85), where it is substantially, though not terminologically, equated with education (*Bildung*), as in **Lessing** – *Bildung* being a term **Herder** may have coined, and which he certainly influenced. D is composed of the D of the cosmos, Earth and Man, the latter thought of as 'the last darling child of Nature; whose formation and reception various evolutions and changes must have preceded' (*Outlines*, 15). The course of world history harmonizes with God's design in this teleological conception of history (*Outlines*, *Book 1–3*).

In his review of the *Outlines*, **Kant** challenges **Herder**'s 'analogy of nature, even if he were to concede that continuous gradation of its creatures, together with the rule governing it, namely the approximation to the human being' (131). Where Herder traces the climatically determined differences of the human species to a 'genetic force', **Kant** concurs insofar as he sees **Herder** wishing to assume 'on the one side the system of evolution and yet also on the other side the mere mechanical influences of external causes' to the benefit of 'a principle of life, which appropriately modifies *itself* internally in accordance with differences of the external circumstances' (139). **Kant** says however that 'one could call this natural vocation of the forming nature also "germs" or "original predispositions", without thereby regarding the former as primordially implanted machines and buds that unfold themselves only when occasioned (as in the system of evolution)' (140). **Fichte** sees nature, in his *The Vocation of Man* (1800), as 'an unbroken chain of phenomena, in which every link is determined by that which has preceded it, and in its turn determines the next'. He takes the inner drive and the outward conditions ('circumstances') together in order to explain nature's 'having developed itself precisely in this manner and no other' (9). Against the materialist conceptions, Fichte puts reason forward as the subject of an 'eternal possession of His self-D […] the Infinite in Himself, – the finite in Him and through Him' (158).

Hegel supersedes this reason in the Substance-Subject of *Spirit*. In Hegel, D is first of all dialectical, in the sense of a D that is driven forward through contradictions within the concept. This process is inexorable and irreversible: 'The way the concept proceeds is no longer passing over or shining in an other. It is instead D since what are differentiated are at the same time immediately posited as identical with one another and with the whole, each being the determinacy that it is as a free being of the whole concept' (*Enc*, § 161). Only the history of Spirit has a D in the literal sense for Hegel (precisely because it is not a history in the empirical sense, but the progression of formations already decided by the eternal nature of Spirit); Hegel understands nature as a 'system of stages', 'but it is not generated *naturally* out of the other but only in the inner Idea which constitutes the ground of Nature' (§ 249). The image of a sequence of stages will also shape the materialistic conceptions of D.

2. Metaphysical accounts are no longer **Marx** and **Engels**'s concern, even if metaphysical echoes can be heard from almost all points of their many-sided oeuvre. Just like **Democritus**, they hold that there is nothing that doesn't change. But differently from ancient thought, **Marx** and **Engels** consider the world a universal complex of D, in which continuity and rupture form a contradictory whole; everything is a result and stage of D. A standstill devoid of D is

a phantom without substance. **Marx** and **Engels** spontaneously understand D as a passage from the lower to the higher in all of their political-programmatic, theoretical and journalistic pronunciations. Though they also recognise regression within progress and even the common ruin of the contending classes. Their own D process comes to the fore in the different measures they use to diagnose or predict transitions from the "lower" to the "higher" or from the simple to the complex. Towards the middle of the 1840s, earlier idealist conceptions of D are replaced by historical materialist practice, the pivotal element of their new conception of D. But the relationship between practice and D remains a contradiction that is never fully clarified. Within an essentially unified theoretical position regarding the trajectory and the motive powers of human developmental history, **Marx** and **Engels**'s comments on **Darwin**'s theory of evolution suggest differences in emphasis and self-understanding, as do their reflections, during the 1870s, on the position of their theory as a theory of D.

D as Progress. Inheriting the Enlightenment meaning of the term, both **Marx** and **Engels** initially identified D with progress. 'Without parties there is no D, without demarcation there is no progress' (MECW 1/202 [MEW 1/104; MEGA I.1/190]), **Marx** wrote in his discussion of Prussian press censorship. In his statement on the banning of the *Rheinische Zeitung*, which addresses the relationship of the press to the state (under the conditions of the time, this meant the relation of the bourgeoisie to feudal absolutism), he writes: 'Since legal D is not possible without D of the laws, and since D of the laws is impossible without criticism of them, and since every criticism of the laws sets the mind and therefore also the heart of the citizen at variance with the existing laws, and since this variance is experienced as dissatisfaction, it follows that a loyal participation of the press in the D of the state is impossible if it is not permitted to arouse dissatisfaction with the existing legal conditions' (MECW 1/364 [MEGA I.1/352]).

The task of the press is therefore taken to consist in serving the progress of public and private systems of law by being oppositional. A D of state and law is only possible by unmasking the existing conditions through critical-rational argumentation. Progress in the sense of D as process and result is grounded in contradiction, resistance and critique. When theoretical-journalistic critique is outlawed, public and private life stagnate. The authority in whose name earlier and present developmental thought will be overthrown is already divulged in the form of publicly practised critique: transformative practice in the course of social struggles.

In **Marx**, the transition to a historical materialist conception of D begins with his confrontation with the D of the concept in **Hegel**'s *Philosophy of Right*. Hegel grasps the family and civil society as emanations of the state; inversely,

Marx treats them as the state's active foundations (MECW 3/7 et sq. [MEW 1/205 et sq.; MEGA I.2/7 et sq.]).

The rupture with the historico-philosophical interpretation of D occurs between 1844 and 1845. In the *1844 Manuscripts*, **Marx** strives to go beyond the limits of political economy and asks: 'What in the evolution of mankind is the meaning of this reduction of the greater part of mankind to abstract labour?' (MECW 3/241 [MEW 40/477; MEGA I.2/208]). He identifies private property as the root cause, private property being the dominant side of an antagonistic relation whose other pole is alienated labour. The worker is key to the abolition of human servitude 'because the whole of human servitude is involved in the relation of the worker to production'. As if he were searching for reason in history in the old theological-philosophical sense, Marx asks again: 'How is this estrangement rooted in the nature of human D? We have already gone a long way to the solution of this problem by *transforming* the question of the *origin of private property* into the question of the relation of *alienated labour* to the course of humanity's D' (MECW 3/280 [MEW 40/521; MEGA I.2/246]). Marx abandons the historico-teleological question of meaning soon after, translating it into the question concerning the objective conditions of a liberated practice, in which working people are valued as ends in themselves.

The D of production is the measure of the historical process in the *GI*. 'How far the productive forces of a nation are developed is shown most manifestly by the degree to which the division of labour has been carried' (MECW 5/32 [MEW 3/21 et sq.]). With the D of the division of labour comes the division between town and country, and the 'various stages of D in the division of labour are just so many different forms of property' (MECW 5/32 [MEW 3/22]). Furthermore: 'Men are the producers of their conceptions, ideas, etc., that is, real, active men, as they are conditioned by a definite D of their productive forces and of the intercourse corresponding to these, up to its furthest forms' (MECW 5/36 [MEW 3/26]). The *Manifesto*, the well-known *Preface '59* and the *Grundrisse* essentially express the same conception of the historical D of humanity. 'In the social production of their existence, men inevitably enter into definite relations, which are independent of their will, namely relations of production appropriate to a given stage in the D of their material forces of production' (MECW 29/263 [MEW 13/8; MEGA II.2/100]). Or: 'Thus when we speak of production, we always have in mind production at a definite stage of social D, production by social individuals' (MECW 28/23 [MEW 13/616; MEGA II.1.1/22]).

It is not apparent whether or not a measure of the same kind can be found for the D of different political and legal systems. There are however clear criteria as to whether this or that system is more or less advanced than another.

It is also clear that in this view scientific D is progressive in the widest sense, even if ideologisation remains a constant threat.

The question of historical determinism remains controversial in the reception of this view. 'No social formation is ever destroyed', the *Preface '59* reads, 'before all the productive forces for which it is sufficient have been developed, and new superior relations of production never replace older ones before the material conditions for their existence have matured within the framework of the old society' (MECW 29/263 [MEW 13/9; MEGA II.2/101]). The difficulty does not so much consist in understanding past history. With regard to this, **Marx**'s conclusions, derived from his extensive historical studies of the 1840s and 1850s, can by and large be accepted. But how compelling are the reasons offered by Marx and **Engels** for the transition from capitalism to socialism/communism? A first order political issue lies within this theoretical problem.

If the emphasis of the debate is placed on the forces of production, one can try to develop **Marx**'s idea that the 'hand-mill gives you society with the feudal lord; the steam-mill, society with the industrial capitalist' (MECW 6/166 [MEW 4/130]). Of course, what characterises the D of the productive forces in socialist or even communist society remains an open question. The failure of state monopoly socialism was due in no small part to its reproduction of types of forces of production that had been introduced in the context of capitalist relations of production.

It would be extremely one-sided to see the formation-theoretical explications as the last word of the Marxian philosophy of history, ignoring their intended political impact. The dialectic of the forces of production and the relations of production was a radical break with all variants of contemporary conceptions of D, undertaken with a world-historical purpose in mind. However, their reductive interpretation led to the misconception that the increased build-up of the productive forces would be enough to tear capitalist relations of production asunder. **Marx** is aware that the productive forces create the 'material conditions' for the solution of the contradictions of capitalism (MECW 29/263 [MEW 13/9; MEGA II.2/101]). This does not mean that the material conditions alone are sufficient to replace the old society with a new one. A possibility does not need to realise itself without action to be "objective". Nobody can accuse Marx or **Engels** of having overlooked or ignored the significance of the subjective moment in the D of world history. On the contrary, their dialectical orientation establishes a relationship between the forces of production unleashed by capitalism and the 'grave-diggers' of this society created by that unleashing (MECW 6/496 [MEW 4/468 et sq.]). For **Marx** and **Engels**, D inescapably goes beyond capitalism because they cannot imagine a humanity intoxicated by the escalating production of profit destroying the natural and social found-

ations of its existence and thereby itself. It is as if they assumed an instinct of self-preservation, to which assumption **Benjamin** devoted the following sentences: 'Marx said that revolutions are the locomotive of world history. But perhaps things are very different. It may be that revolutions are the act by which the human race traveling in the train applies the emergency brake' (**Benjamin** 2003, 402).

Relationship to evolutionism. **Marx** and **Engels** were initially reticent to address the question of biological evolution; what thrilled Engels about **Darwin**'s *On the Origin of Species* (1859) was that Darwin had 'demolished' teleology in the natural sciences. 'Never before has so grandiose an attempt been made to demonstrate historical evolution in Nature' (letter to **Marx**, 11 or 12 December 1859, MECW 40/551 [MEW 29/524]). Taking a second look at **Darwin**'s work, **Marx** 'amuses' himself by casting light upon **Darwin**'s epistemological self-misrecognitions. What strikes **Marx** as particularly remarkable is 'how **Darwin** rediscovers, among the beasts and plants, the society of England with its division of labour, competition, opening up of new markets, "inventions" and Malthusian "struggle for existence". It is **Hobbes**'s *bellum omnium contra omnes* and is reminiscent of **Hegel**'s *Phenomenology*, in which civil society figures as an "intellectual animal kingdom", whereas, in **Darwin**, the animal kingdom figures as civil society' (letter to **Engels**, 18 June 1862, MECW 41/381 [MEW 30/249]).

Engels is more of a child of his time than **Marx** on this subject. He is carried away by his opposition to **Dühring** when the latter warns, as **Engels** reports in *AD*, 'against the misuse of the terms metamorphosis and D'; **Dühring** argues that 'the concept of D is permissible only in so far as laws of D can be really established' (MECW 25/70 [MEW 20/70]). **Engels** does not adopt **Dühring**'s stance of methodological scepticism; he throws himself, with gusto, into the proof that he and **Marx** can actually demonstrate the existence of such laws of D. Later, in the *Dialectics of Nature*, **Engels** differentiates between the '*struggle for existence*', brought about by 'plant and animal *over-population*', and an evolution of plants and animals that takes place without this pressure (MECW 25/582 [MEW 20/563 et sq.; MEGA I.26/124]). Engels thereby rejects **Darwin**'s blanket adoption of Malthusianism as the basis of evolution and dissolves the identification of D with progress in this context. In doing so he stresses, as the 'main thing: that each advance in organic evolution is at the same time a regression, fixing *one-sided* evolution and excluding the possibility of evolution in many other directions' (MECW 25/583 [MEW 20/564; MEGA I.26/125]; cf. MECW 25/517 [MEW 20/504; MEGA I.25/108]).

The concept of D and the status of theory. – **Darwin**'s theory, as well as other breakthroughs in the natural sciences, prompts **Marx** and **Engels** to reflect upon the status of their own theory in the system of sciences. While **Marx**

concentrates on elaborating his work on the critique of economics, **Engels** turns, for reasons related to political and theoretical debates of the 1870s and 1880s, to the problem of a general dialectic (see *DN*, *AD* and, in part, *LF*). Central to his project of conceiving of the dialectic as 'the science of universal inter-connection' is the assumption that, quite generally, universal D is effected 'through contradiction or negation of the negation' and that it takes a 'spiral form' (MECW 25/313 [MEW 20/307; MEGA I.26/173]). Engels is convinced that 'despite all temporary retrogression, a progressive D asserts itself in the end' (MECW 26/384 [MEW 21/293]).

The subsumption of nature, society and human thought under a principle of D has brought about ambivalent effects. The two, three or four general dialectical laws of the naturalistically determined whole (see MECW 25/110 et sqq., 131, 313, 356 [MEW 20/111 et sqq., 131, 307, 348]), which appear more or less arbitrarily, prove to be extremely harmful in the history of Marxism and produce more dogmatism than genuine theory. – **Marx**'s stance to this cannot be clearly ascertained. On the one hand, Marx is the one who, perhaps unintentionally, gave **Engels** the idea of dialectical laws, with his comments in *C I* that the law of the transformation of quantity into quality is valid for history just as it is in chemistry (MECW 35/313 [MEW 23/327]). **Marx**'s attitude is more sympathetic than committed (although his reticence may be due to the fact that many of **Engels**'s notes about a general dialectic of D were unknown to him). **Marx**'s own ambition is not that of drawing up a new worldview.

3. The naturalistic tendency evident in **Engels** intensifies in **Kautsky**, who says of himself that he had 'come to Darwinism before Marxism' and studied it 'zealously', since he was still 'lukewarm, even hostile towards **Marx**' and 'a committed materialist of the **Büchner** stamp' (1910, V). Following **Engels**'s burial speech at the grave of **Marx** (MECW 24/463 et sq. [MEW 19/335]), **Kautsky** virtually identifies **Marx** with **Darwin**. For **Kautsky**, who in a short space of time, through the influence of **Engels**'s *Anti-Dühring*, becomes the decisive propagandist of Marxism (which he helps create) there is no fundamental difference between historical and natural D. This is evident even in his rejection of the vulgar materialism of the natural sciences, which he accuses of 'failing to recognise the specific nature of the social organism' (VIII). Society is to him 'merely a piece of nature with particular laws, which, if one wishes, can also be called natural laws, for they don't differ from these in their essence' (11). This way of thinking was almost universally shared in early Marxism. Thus **Dietzgen** announced 'that the future develops organically out of the present' (*Zukunft*, 136). Linguistic usage, which posits D for both nature and history, invited such views. Even **Marx**'s son-in-law, Edward **Aveling**, set himself 'the task of popular-

ising Darwinian theory' (1887). Aveling titled the first part of his text *Evolutionary Theory* and began by ranking **Darwin**'s theory as part of a 'comprehensive' 'evolutionary (developmental) theory'. According to **Aveling**, *D/evolution* is the 'name for the unity and the uninterrupted connection of appearances', and the 'true evolutionary' – note the shortening of 'revolutionary' – 'recognises no cleavage between humans and other animals' (7). While still innocent at the time of its genesis, social evolutionism comes under the sway, within the Second International, of the hegemony of the liberal faith in D and progress; following the November revolution of 1918, it directly serves the counterrevolutionary demagogy of the Social Democratic leadership, pacifying the revolting masses with phrases such as the one that 'socialism is on the march'. Rosa **Luxemburg** calls for resistance against this ideology of the "automatic progress"; in ever new turns of phrase, she calls for the practico-political activity of the labouring masses to be promoted.

With **Lenin**, human activity returns to the forefront of the conception of D. Consequently, the meaning of the formulation "human D" changes. While for **Marx** the D of capitalism seems to be an objective and lawful process (although he qualifies this view in his later reflections, and even as early as the French edition of *Capital*; at times he even seems to retract it altogether: see MECW 24/200 et sq., 370 [MEW 19/111 et sq., 242]), **Lenin**'s early work *The D of Capitalism in Russia* shows that D can also mean a project for the future: capitalism has (as the title of the last section suggests) a historical "mission" and is therefore to be promoted. Socialism can only be established at capitalism's mature stage, and this takes on the character of a project: it is "organised".

However, activism and a naturalistically inflected determinism coalesce repeatedly in **Lenin**. His writings, all of which are more or less intended to be immediately political, deal overwhelmingly with problems of the present. Accordingly, D is understood primarily as "present D" within the purview of an analysis of the balance of power relations and the possibilities of intervention; even those writings involving claims of principle, such as *State and Revolution* and *Imperialism*, deal mostly with the present and near future. It is otherwise in the *Philosophical Notebooks*, jotted down for personal study and self-understanding, where both D and unity are set down as basic principles. 'In addition, the universal principle of D must be combined, linked, made to correspond with the universal principle of the *unity of the world*, nature, motion, matter, etc.' (CW 38, 254). Of the revisionists, Lenin says that they are characterised by their 'replacing [of] "artful" (and revolutionary) dialectics by "simple" (and tranquil) "evolution"' (CW 15, 31).

The early Soviet debate between "dialecticians" or "Hegelians" on the one hand and "mechanicists" on the other dealt with the rhythm of historical D:

does it advance through leaps, or is it continuous? Does a transformation of culture automatically follow from a politico-economic revolution or should the revolutionaries intervene to transform cultural life in a targeted fashion? Abram **Deborin** and **Bukharin**'s contributions to this debate, which number among the most interesting, testify to the short period of lively philosophical thought that is then violently choked off under **Stalin** (see *Questions of Leninism*), with the victory of the so-called general line. From now on, an unflinching orthodoxy prevails: there are three dialectical laws that uniformly effect all D.

In complete accord with the position approved by **Stalin**, Marxism-Leninism conceives of 'the materialist dialectic as a comprehensive theory of D' entailing that 'in objective reality, and due to the effects of the contradictions within and between things, there occur such movements and changes as to constitute a transition from lower to higher qualities and hence, with regard to the overall process, an ascendant D' (**Bartsch**/**Klimaszewsky** 1975, 40 et sq.). But this 'comprehensive theory' stops short before the cosmos. 'There is no D *of* the cosmos, only D *in* the cosmos' (**Kirchhoff**/**Klaus**/**Kröber** 1975, 338). This is taken as a synchronous 'unity of "ascendant" and "descendant" lines' (ibid.).

This theory of D sees itself (in an unreflected contradiction with **Marx**) as built upon the 'foundation' of a 'philosophical materialism dialectically extended to society' (**Redlow** 1977, 8). The so-called philosophy of practice – with **Korsch** and **Lukács** as forerunners – is considered an opponent of this conception (10 et sq.). The materialist dialectic is held to constitute 'a unified whole: it grounds a scientific understanding of the *lawful order* of the world, which is *an order of motion and D*' (**Stiehler** 1977, 20). D is defined as the accumulation (beyond mere movement) of 'many individual processes of motion, in which qualitative contradictions transform into a new, higher quality, through the effects of inner and outer contradictions' (23). Peter **Ruben** comes to the conclusion, on the basis of an exhaustive study of scientific concepts of D, that the 'synthetic theory of evolution provides an empirical foundation for representing the basic dialectical laws of nature: biological evolution generally rests on the production of species, which appear statistically in the relationship between mutations and identical reduplicates, and this shows contradiction to be the essence of all movement. Here mutations are simple negations of a pre-existing species-*norm*. The negation of the negation takes place through selection, the former as the reproduction of the unity of the species as dependent on the environmental conditions' (1977, 127). Here, the project of a dialectical revolutionisation of developmental thought turns into the evolutionisation of the materialist dialectic.

In the late phase of state-monopoly socialism, the scientific-technical revolution is credited with the integration of human activity into natural D

itself. 'Human activity with respect to natural processes is no longer mediated through matter and energy, but realizes itself, in an immediately communicative manner, as information. Thus man moves from the imitation of biological processes to their construction, by steering their evolution in accordance with his aims [...] Man's rule over nature, which asserts itself through the conscious management of natural processes, does not remain an external relation. Rather, human creativity becomes the universal internal developmental moment of natural D' (**Jünger** 1985, 97).

4. The perspective in **Lukács**'s *History and Class Consciousness* (1923) is as universal as **Hegel**'s. **Lukács** speaks of the D of the social totality, within which everything is included; an (often diachronic) correlation between the objective D of society and the subjective consciousness of the progressive class is outlined, with Lukács referring to the overall complex as a "process". Revolutionary class consciousness is underpinned by a sense of D. 'Marxist theory is designed to put the proletariat into a very particular frame of mind. The capitalist state must appear to it as a link in a chain of historical D' (*HCC*, 262). This removes the state from its ideological interiorisation and renders it "external" to consciousness. It is 'merely a real fact whose actual power must be reckoned with but which has no inherent right to determine our actions' (ibid.) – **Lukács**'s antipole within the Marxist tradition is **Althusser**, who wishes to liberate Marxist theory from what he considers **Hegel**ian mysticism and historicism. It is questionable, he writes, whether one can even speak of a uniform historical D. Consequently, he speaks of a 'law of uneven D' and approvingly quotes **Mao** Zedong: 'Nothing in this world develops absolutely evenly' (**Althusser**, *For Marx*, 201). From this, it also follows that 'History is *open*' (**Sève** 1980, 207).

A general theory of D may therefore be subject to the very suspicion, with regard to the 'master-key of a general historico-philosophical theory', that became a certainty for **Marx**, namely that its 'supreme virtue consists in being suprahistorical' (MECW 24/201 [MEW 19/112]). Thus, under the sign of post-communist disillusionment, there is no longer any talk of an ascendant, and much less of a guaranteed D. It now appears simply as an 'irreversible processual change' (**Schurig** 1990, 706). The poor elaboration of the term is followed by the renunciation of its elaboration as such. The loss of the guarantee is answered by the loss of content. That will hardly be the last word on this issue.

Sven-Eric Liedman, Thomas Marxhausen, and Wolfgang Fritz Haug
Translated by Darren Roso

Bibliography

L. **Althusser**, *For Marx*, London 1969.

E.B. **Aveling**, *Darwin Made Easy*, London 1887.

G. **Bartsch**, G. **Klimaszewsky**, *Materialistische Dialektik – ihre Grundgesetze und Kategorien*, Berlin/GDR 1975.

W. **Benjamin**, *Selected Writings*, vol. 4, ed. H. Eiland and M.W. Jennings, Cambridge (MA) 2003.

C. **Darwin**, *On the Origin of Species by means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle of Life* (1859), London 2019.

A. **Deborin**, N. **Bucharin**, *Kontroversen über dialektischen und mechanizistischen Materialismus*, Frankfurt/M 1969.

J. **Dietzgen**, 'Die Zukunft der Sozialdemokratie', in: *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. E. Dietzgen, vol. 3, Stuttgart 1922.

J. **Jünger**, *Die Vergesellschaftung der Produktion im entwickelten Sozialismus als einheitlicher Prozeß von wissenschaftlich-technischer Revolution und sozial-ökonomischer Reife und die qualitativ neuen Anforderungen an die Forschungs- und Entwicklungsarbeit der Kombinate*, Diss. A, Karl-Marx-Universität Leipzig 1985.

K. **Kautsky**, *Vermehrung und Entwicklung in Natur und Gesellschaft* (1910), Stuttgart-Berlin 1921.

R. **Kirchhoff**, G. **Klaus**, G. **Kröber**, 'Entwicklung', in: *Philosophisches Wörterbuch*, ed. M. Buhr, G. Klaus, vol. 1, Leipzig 1975.

A. **Labriola**, 'In Memory of the Communist Manifesto' (1895), *Social Scientist*, vol. 27, 1999, no. 1–4, 3–48.

A.N. **Leontiev**, *Problems of the Development of the Mind*, Moscow 1981.

S.E. **Liedman**, *Das Spiel der Gegensätze. Friedrich Engels' Philosophie und die Wissenschaften des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Frankfurt/M-New York 1986.

G. **Redlow**, 'Zur Einheit von Materialismus und Dialektik', in: Redlow and Stiehler 1977, 7–18.

G. **Redlow**, G. **Stiehler** (eds.), *Philosophische Probleme der Entwicklung*, Berlin/GDR 1977.

P. **Ruben**, 'Das Entwicklungskonzept in der Naturerkenntnis', in: Redlow and Stiehler 1977, 97–128.

V. **Schurig**, 'Entwicklung', *Europäische Enzyklopädie zu Philosophie und Wissenschaften*, ed. H.J. Sandkühler, vol. 1, 1990, 706–24.

L. **Sève**, *Une introduction à la philosophie marxiste: Suivie d'un vocabulaire philosophique*, Paris 1980.

K. **Weyand**, 'Entwicklung', *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, ed. J. Ritter, K. Gründer, G. Gabriel, vol. 2, 1972, 550–7.

→ change/to transform, countries, Darwinism, dependency theory, derivation/deduction/backtracing, determinism, developing, dialectics, dialectics of nature, dialectical materialism, dispersion/distraction, education/formation, Engelsianism, epoch, evolution, evolutionary economics, evolutionism, forward, genesis, historical necessity, history, indeterminism, intellectual history, iron, materialism, maturity, modernisation in order to catch up, movement, negation of negation, non-simultaneity, philosophy of practice, philosophy of praxis, progress, revolution, selection, self-organisation, self-transformation, Social Darwinism, spirit/mind, sublation, sustainable development, theory of social development, underdevelopment, unequal development

→ Ableitung, Aufhebung, Bewegung, Bildung, Darwinismus, Dependenztheorie, Determinismus, Dialektik, Dialektischer Materialismus, ehern, Engelsismus, Entwicklungsländer, Epoche, Evolution, Evolutionismus, evolutorische Ökonomik, Fortschritt, Geist, Geistesgeschichte, Genese, Geschichte, historische Notwendigkeit, Indeterminismus, Materialismus, nachhaltige Entwicklung, nachholende Modernisierung, Naturdialektik, Negation der Negation, Philosophie der Praxis, Praxisphilosophie, Reife, Selbstorganisation, Selbstveränderung, Selektion, Sozialdarwinismus, Theorie der gesellschaftlichen Entwicklung, Umwälzung, ungleiche Entwicklung, Ungleichzeitigkeit, Unterentwicklung, Verändern, vorwärts, Zerstreuung

CHAPTER 11

Disposable Time

A: al-waqt taḥta at-taṣarruf. – F: temps disponible. – G: disponible Zeit. – R: imejuščeesja v rasporjaženii vremeni. – S: tiempo disponible. – C: kě zìjǐ zhīpèi de shíjiān 可自己支配的时间

I. DT can be understood, in a first step, as a reserve of socially available time beyond what is necessary for reproduction. From the standpoint of the individual, DT is freely disposable, as opposed to time determined by others. On the one hand, it is a condition for the possibility of enjoyment and the development of the capacity for enjoyment and, on the other hand, for the opportunity of self-determined and self-planned labour. The conditions for DT include labour productivity and property.

1. In the ancient world, labour was not considered essential to the human being. It was imposed upon slaves or poor freemen. **Aristotle** conceives of the human being as a speaking and 'political animal' (cf. *Politics*, I.2, 1253a1–19), not as a labouring one. Labour (Πόνος) was burden, suffering, poverty, Sisyphus's boulder. Besides warfare, the Roman Empire provided its impoverished citizens with "bread and circuses" at the cost of others. – The free, male, wealthy member of the Greek polis devoted himself to political, cultural, athletic, military, and religious activities, in addition to carrying out the commanding and leadership functions of the οἰκοδεσπότης (literally, "master of the house", in the sense of "landowner"). The precondition for this is DT as "noble leisure" (σχολή, or Latin: schola); without it, there can neither be education towards ἀρετή ('virtue') nor any life in the sense of the same. But leisure is also the time for scholarship, of scholarly dispute, of school (hence, the name of medieval "scholasticism"). It makes possible the free, universal social activity of a small elite who is not subject to any external coercion.

In Christianity, man develops his personhood – not exclusively, but to a significant degree – through labour. Man, in his existence as a being made in God's image, is considered a "co-worker" and "partner" of God (cf. 1 Corinthians 3:9; **Klüber** 1982, 46 et sq.). Yet labour is performed as divine punishment after the exile from Eden. Labour is above all a means of instruction and of restraining carnal desire. In the gospel of **Matthew** (19:24), an idle, wealthy existence is regarded as sinful. Meanwhile, in practical life, the relationship between labour

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_012
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

and non-labour was ambivalent. Grave concern for one's daily bread was a matter for the mob. The nobility passed its time with hunting, through tournaments, or by doing away with one another in constant feuds. This "heroic laziness" stands in opposition to an ethics of Christian labour. As wealth grew during the Renaissance, the merchant bourgeoisie developed a lifestyle of lavish indulgence, which then could spread to the other propertied classes (cf. **Kofler** 1948, 126).

2. The determinants of DT begin with classical political economy's labour theory of value and theories of distribution as well as the related study of the magnitude of the social surplus product. Adam **Smith** asks how the individual and the commonwealth can best be provided with 'all the necessaries and conveniences of life' (*Wealth*, I, 10). For him, productive labour is that which not only makes up for the immediate costs of production, including its own wages, but also yields a *surplus* over and above these costs, from which the 'unproductive workers' are supplied: Politicians, the army, 'churchmen, lawyers, physicians, men of letters of all kinds; players, buffoons, musicians, opera-singers, opera-dancers, etc. [...] are maintained by a part of the annual produce of the industry of other people' (I, 331).

Rousseau, in his classic work on education, *Emile* (1762), begins to expose the contradictions that arise in a society where production and consumption, labour and usufruct, fall to two different social groups: 'he who eats in idleness what he did not earn himself steals it' (344; cf. **Ahrbeck** 1984, 83 et sq.). Being a human being and knowing how to live is **Rousseau**'s character ideal. **Sismondi** takes this up, writing that only a society in which an individual 'enjoys sufficient leisure or comforts to feel intensely, or to think deeply' (1819/1971, 21 et sq.) can be described as progressive-enlightened, as 'civilised'. Seen from the point of view of critical utopias, the category "wealth" acquires the further dimension of spiritual wealth (cf. **Zahn** 1984, 145 et sq.). Apart from material wealth, people should 'appreciate the fine arts [and] know the laws of natural phenomena, as well as the procedures for altering them', demands **Saint-Simon** (1822/1977, 337). Intellectual wealth appears as the totality of knowledge and skills: The scientific knowledge and intellectual, cultural, and literary values and insights that the members of society possess. **Fourier** sees in his theory of free labour the future identity of labour and 'enjoyment' (1826/1980, 34) in the new societarian world.

3. **Marx** carefully expands on the dimensions of DT in his *CPE*. In his *London Notebooks 1850–53*, he quotes from a text published anonymously in 1821: 'A nation is really rich only if no interest is paid for the use of capital; when only

six hours instead of twelve hours are worked […] "Wealth […] is *disposable time*, and nothing more"' (MEGA IV.9/163; although this passage is reproduced in English in MECW 32/389 as part of the *Economic Manuscript of 1861–63*). The MEGA has identified its author as the English literary critic Charles Wentworth **Dilke** (cf. MEGA IV.9/616). Dilke takes up **Ricardo**'s labour theory of value and regards the surplus product of society as being created by surplus labour. This presupposes a sufficiently high level of labour productivity and institutionalised property relations to enable the appropriation of the surplus labour of others. **Dilke** understands bourgeois society as a class society in which the working classes receive only that portion of the product of their labour that is necessary for survival, while the greater portion is appropriated by the non-working classes.

In *Gr*, **Marx** was able to explore a whole ensemble of social relations and forms of consciousness by investigating productive labour. With 'the development of large industry', when in the form of planning, constructing, or projecting, 'the application of science to direct production itself' takes place and labour power is used in the material process of production as 'watchman and regulator' (*Gr*, 703 et sq. [MEGA II.1.2/580 et sq.; MEW 42/599 et sq.]), material wealth is no longer generated by productive labour in the sense of labour producing surplus value for capital: 'with that, production based on exchange value breaks down' (705 [582; 601]) and the possibility of substantive emancipation emerges. The material wealth created in production is 'the condition for the development of general wealth', just as the '*surplus labour of the mass*' is the material basis for the '*non-labour of the few*, for the development of the general powers of the human head' (705 [581 et sq.; 601]). The true wealth of society is realised through the 'free development of individualities', through their self-activity. It is constituted not by labour time, but rather through '[*t*]*he creation of a large quantity of disposable time* apart from necessary labour time for society generally and each of its members (i.e., room for the development of the individuals' full productive forces, hence those of society also)' (708 [583 et sq.; 603]).

Agnes **Heller** (1976, 110) points out that in order for a person to take their place "alongside the process of production", it is necessary that their labour power has some special qualification. **Marx** does not elaborate further on this aspect or consider in particular the implications for the relationship between productive labour and material needs. As postulated in the *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (MECW 24/87 [MEW 19/21]), labour as 'life's prime want' applies more to qualified, regulatory activity than to simple, mechanical labour, because at least the opposition between mental and manual labour is not as great.

The optimal satisfaction of the radical need for '*DT*' – the English term is used in the *Economic Manuscript of 1861–63* and characterised as 'wealth itself, partly for the enjoyment of the product, partly for FREE ACTIVITY which – unlike LABOUR – is not determined by a compelling extraneous purpose which must be fulfilled' (MECW 32/391 [MEGA II.3.4/1388; MEW 26.3/253]) – presupposes a society in which individuals have a need for more free time in which they can make use of the manifold possibilities for free activity and behaviour, 'for ENJOYMENT, for leisure' (390 [1387; 252]), and not just continually produce new articles to be consumed by status seekers. In this society, people's needs form the part of reality that they attempt to become aware of for the purpose of planning. Here, **Marx** develops the idea of human self-determination, which originated in the Enlightenment and German Idealism, by revealing the socioeconomic conditions that are necessary to realise it. – Michael **Walzer** suspects that **Marx** did not appreciate the mere "passing of time" as a meaningful way of filling DT (1983, 188). In fact, Marx understood time as a dimension of human development (see **Negt** 1984, 25). **Marx** counts as DT '[t]ime for education, for intellectual development, for the fulfilment of social functions, for social intercourse, for the free play of the vital forces' of one's 'body and [...] mind, even the rest time of Sunday' (*C I*, 375 [MEW 23/280]).

With factory-organised wage labour, time becomes 'a means of economy and rationality' (**Maurer** 1992, 117). The capital relation posits, as **Marx** recognises in *C I*, the 'saving of time as a necessity' (*C I*, 606 [MEW 23/500]). This economy of time not only destroys the traditional understanding of time and pre-industrial work habits, but also strives to overcome every cultural barrier with regard to working time: for capital, all the worker's DT is 'by nature and by right labour-time' (375 [280]). Capital's drive for valorisation even usurps time *beyond* DT: 'time for growth, development and healthy maintenance of the body'; furthermore 'time required for the consumption of fresh air and sunlight' (ibid.); the time for meals, sleeping time, 'for the family itself'; and even for 'the children's play' (517 [416 et sq.]).

The contradiction between economic principles and cultural needs is characteristic of the history of industrial capitalism. Thus, in the *Inaugural Address*, **Marx** declares the 'struggle about the legal restriction of the hours of labour' (MECW 20/11 [MEW 16/11]) to be a struggle over distribution and a class struggle between 'the political economy of the middle class' (i.e., the Bourgeoisie) and 'the political economy of the working class', being two economies with fundamentally different understandings of costs, rationality criteria, and the cultural significance of production.

In *C III*, **Marx** speaks of the 'realm of freedom': it 'begins only where labour determined by necessity and external expediency ends', and within it begins

'the development of human powers as an end in itself' (*C III*, 958 et sq. [MEW 25/828]). In the 'realm of necessity', the basic material needs of society are produced under conditions that the subject does not create out of itself sovereignly (ibid.).

André **Gorz** points out (1986, 166) that in modern times, the sphere of necessity has neither the same scope nor the same characteristics as in **Marx**'s time. The production of goods and services for the necessities of life is thoroughly industrialised and originates in "heteronomous" labour, i.e., through gainful employment characterised by a social division of labour and a high level of specialisation. The customer/consumer/member of an advertising target group hardly can execute any influence on the conditions of this labour or its products. Freedom therefore consists less and less in disconnecting ourselves from the work that is indispensable for life, but rather in seizing for ourselves scopes of autonomy by truly wanting to do what we do and taking responsibility for it.

In *Gr*, **Marx** criticises the view that labour is a curse and that only "tranquillity" leads to a condition of freedom and happiness; against **Smith**, he argues that the individual '"in his normal state of health, strength, activity, skill, facility", also needs a normal portion of work', i.e. also 'the suspension of tranquillity' (*Gr*, 611 [MEGA II.1.2/499; MEW 42/512]). **Marx** calls the overcoming of obstacles through labour a 'liberating activity' and points out that 'the external aims become stripped of the semblance of merely external natural urgencies', and, 'as aims which the individual himself posits', will determine the content of labour. This positing of aims is 'self-realization' and 'hence real freedom, whose action is, precisely, labour'. By free labour he understands that 'its social character is posited' and that 'it is of a scientific and at the same time general character – not merely human exertion as a specifically harnessed natural force, but exertion as subject, which appears in the production process not in a merely natural, spontaneous form, but as an activity regulating all the forces of nature' (ibid.). Marx notes the possibility of a profound transformation in humanity's interaction with nature, and of an abolition [*Aufhebung*] of the opposition between necessity and freedom, between work and play.

Volker Gransow and Gunter Willing

Bibliography

R. **Ahrbeck**, *Die allseitig entwickelte Persönlichkeit: Studien zur Geschichte des humanistischen Bildungsideals*, Berlin/GDR 1984.

C. **Fourier**, 'Die zwei Ziele der Sozietären Theorie: Manuskript (1826)', *Ökonomisch-Philosophische Schriften: Eine Textauswahl*, ed. L. Zahn, Berlin/GDR 1980.

A. **Gorz**, *Critique of Economic Reason*, London 1989.

A. **Heller**, *The Theory of Need in Marx*, London 1976.

F. **Klüber**, *Der Umbruch des Denkens in der katholischen Soziallehre*, Cologne 1982.

L. **Kofler**, *Zur Geschichte der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft*, Halle 1948 (2nd edn. Neuwied-Berlin/W 1967; newly revised edn. Berlin 1992).

A. **Maurer**, *Alles eine Frage der Zeit? Die Zweckrationalisierung von Arbeitszeit und Lebenszeit*, Berlin 1992.

O. **Negt**, *Lebendige Arbeit, enteignete Zeit: Politische und kulturelle Dimensionen des Kampfes um die Arbeitszeit*, Frankfurt/M 1982.

J.J. **Rousseau**, *Emile: or On Education*, Hanover (NH) 2009.

C.-H. **de Saint-Simon**, 'Über die Bourbonen und die Stuarts' (1822), *Ausgewählte Schriften*, ed. L. Zahn, Berlin/GDR 1977, 330–43.

J.C.L.S. **de Sismondi**, *Neue Grundsätze der Politischen Ökonomie* (1819), 2 vol.s, ed. A. Toepel, Berlin/GDR 1971.

M. **Walzer**, *Spheres of Justice: A Defense of Pluralism and Equality*, New York 1983.

L. **Zahn**, *Utopischer Sozialismus und Ökonomiekritik: Eine ökonomiegeschichtliche Untersuchung zu den theoretischen Quellen des Marxismus*, Berlin/GDR 1984.

→ bourgeoisie, conception of the human being, critique of political economy, economy of time, ensemble of the social relations, exploitation, factory, feudalism, Fourierism, freedom/liberty, game/play, general labour/universal labour, humanisation of work, labour, labour time, laziness, lumpenproletariat, mind and hand, mode of life, nature, necessity, ownership/property, productive/unproductive labour, productivity, profession, reduction of working (labour) time, relationship of humans and nature, satisfaction, surplus, surplus labour, surplus product, time, utopian socialism, women's labour/female labour, working class

→ allgemeine Arbeit, Arbeit, Arbeiterklasse, Arbeitszeit, Arbeitszeitverkürzung, Ausbeutung, Befriedigung, Beruf, Besitz/Eigentum, Bourgeoisie, Ensemble der gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse, Fabrik, Faulheit, Feudalismus, Fourierismus, Frauenarbeit, Freiheit, Humanisierung der Arbeit, Kopf und Hand, Kritik der politischen Ökonomie, Lebensweise, Lumpenproletariat, Mehrarbeit, Mehrprodukt, Menschenbild, Mensch-Natur-Verhältnis, Natur, Notwendigkeit, Ökonomie der Zeit, produktive/unproduktive Arbeit, Produktivität, Spiel, Surplus, utopischer Sozialismus, Zeit

II. If DT encompasses the historically and morally determined period of time that is not dedicated to the production 'of the mere means of subsistence' and 'the costs of maintenance of the labour' (**Engels**, MECW 25/180 [MEW 20/180]), we immediately encounter a number of conflicting aims and blind spots. By concentrating on the part of social labour performed as gainful employment, the shortening of the working day, and the constant attempts by businessmen to place at their own disposal the largest possible portion of potential 'DT' in order to convert it into surplus labour, the part of total social labour not performed as gainful employment disappears from analysis. The question of domestic and family work is in effect left to the historically contingent developments of patriarchy. Yet early on, **Marx** had described 'this latent slavery in the family, though still very crude', as historically 'the first form of property', the content of which consists in 'disposing of the labour-power of others' (MECW 5/46 [MEW 3/32]). Subsequently, however, he did not devote any attention to the development of this part of labour within the context of the analysis of total social wealth as DT. – In the 1970s, the women's movement developed a critique of Marx's analysis of value that became known as the *domestic-labour debate*, and subsequently a criticism of the focus on the liberation of wage labourers (inter alia **Dalla Costa** 1972; **Dietrich** 1984; **Haug** and **Hauser** 1984; **Mies** 1981; **Neusüß** 1985; **Seccombe** 1974; **v. Werlhof** 1978). The criticism that the total social labour, or rather the labour of women in the household, had not been comprehensively taken into account here implies doubts about the determination of DT, which extended to the entire socialist project of liberation as a male construct: The women's movement 'poses by its very existence and must pose with increasing articulation in action that women refuse the myth of liberation through work' (**Dalla Costa** 1972, 49). The focus of feminist analysis and action was on sexuality (**Mitchell** 1975), violence, abortion, consciousness and culture (**Rowbotham** 1979), as well as questions of the disconnect/correlation between patriarchy and capitalism (inter alia **Hartmann** 1981; **I. Young** 1981; **K. Young** et al. 1981).

Notions of an alternative life, energies for change, and perspectives for the future enter into considerations of DT. Profound changes in the nature of work in the 1980s and 1990s and the increase in productivity – which should have led to radical reductions in labour time but instead resulted in structural unemployment on an increasing scale – also mobilised imagination concerning the future. In the chapter 'Labour as a necessity of life – only utopias are still realistic' (1984, 165 et sqq.) of his book on labour time, for example, Oskar **Negt** states as the quintessence of his discussion of labour utopias that the reduction of labour time is an essential means for the communal organisation of life: 'From being appendages of the social machinery, by which they are dragged

along and the laws of which they must subordinate themselves to, they become associated and cooperative producers, by means of which they find themselves in a position to concentrate the overwhelming part of their social imagination and their labouring energy on political communal work. The abolition of fears of losing one's job, of everyday existential material worries in general, opens up opportunities for the extension of work to political and cultural, to creative fields of activity' (214). The ability to freely dispose of one's own time makes it possible to not leave politics to representatives, to be culturally active in citizens' initiatives, and to open up further creative possibilities for action. It's a good thing to imagine these men. Only, what's forgotten is that the phenomena of crisis previously analysed in Negt's book also referred to the domains of the reproduction of life – among other things, the lifeworld, housing, consciousness-shaping industries, leisure, morality; what's forgotten is that there's still something to be organised at all. Shouldn't this perspective also include the spheres of childcare and the physical and psychological restoration of individuals? Henri **Lefebvre** (1945/1977, I) was one of the first to work out that life during free time is subordinated to the imperative of relaxation as an inversion of alienated labour time. – In the case of women, who as employees and housewives have practically no "free time", the struggle for DT turns out to be a problem of finding one's own identity (**Haug**/**Hauser** 1988). On the premise that the production of the means of subsistence as commodities reduces the 'production of life' itself to a secondary matter, any conception of liberation must provide for a reorganisation of social production, a new social contract, which is also a gender contract. This places the question of DT, as well as the question of other understandings of wealth, in a conflict over aims. Disposal over DT reveals itself to be not only contested terrain between capital and labour, but also a struggle for a model of civilisation worth living in. On a theoretical level, this can be formulated in terms of a 'renunciation' of the further extension of DT by shortening the labour share of production, or in terms of the planned disposal over DT for socially and ecologically necessary activities (cf. **Haug** 1990).

Frigga Haug
Both parts of the article translated by Alexander Locascio

Bibliography

M. **Dalla Costa**, 'Women and the Subversion of the Community', ed. S. James, *The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community*, Bristol 1972.

G. **Dietrich**, 'Die unvollendete Aufgabe einer marxistischen Fassung der Frauenfrage', Projekt Sozialistischer Feminismus (ed.), *Geschlechterverhältnisse und Frauenpolitik*, Berlin/W 1984, 24–41.

H. **Hartmann**, 'The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Towards a More Progressive Union', L. Sargent (ed.), *Women and Revolution: The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism*, London 1981.

F. **Haug**, 'Ökonomie der Zeit, darin löst sich schließlich alle Ökonomie auf', *Argument* 184, vol. 32, 1990, 879–94.

F. **Haug**, 'Geschlechterverhältnisse: Zur internationalen Diskussion um Marxismus-Feminismus', Projekt Sozialistischer Feminismus (ed.), *Geschlechterverhältnisse und Frauenpolitik*, Berlin/W 1984, 9–23, 42–102.

F. **Haug**, 'Probleme mit weiblicher Identität', F. Haug, K. Hauser (eds.), *Subjekt Frau*, Berlin/W 1988.

H. **Lefebvre**, *Critique of Everyday Life, Volume 1: Introduction*, London 1945/2008.

M. **Mies**, *Marxistischer Sozialismus und Frauenemanzipation*, Den Haag 1981.

J. **Mitchell**, *Pyschoanalysis and Feminism*, New York 1975.

O. **Negt**, *Lebendige Arbeit, enteignete Zeit: Politische und kulturelle Dimensionen des Kampfes um die Arbeitszeit*, Frankfurt/M 1984.

C. **Neusüß**, *Die Kopfgeburten der Arbeiterbewegung oder Die Genossin Luxemburg bringt alles durcheinander*, Hamburg-Zurich 1985.

S. **Rowbotham**, 'The Women's Movement and Organizing for Socialism', S. Rowbotham, L. Segal, H. Wainwright, *Beyond the Fragments: Feminism and the Making of Socialism*, London 1979.

W. **Seccombe**, 'The Housewife and her Labour under Capitalism', *New Left Review*, 1974, no. 83, 3–24.

C. **v. Werlhof**, 'Frauenarbeit: Der blinde Fleck in der Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie', *Beiträge zur feministischen Theorie und Praxis*, vol. 1, 1978, no. 1, 18–32.

I. **Young**, 'Beyond the Unhappy Marriage: A Critique of the Dual Systems Theory', L. Sargent (ed.), *Women and Revolution: The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism*, London 1981.

K. **Young**, C.F. **Wolkowitz**, R. **McCullagh** (eds.), *Of Marriage and the Market: Women's Subordination in International Perspective*, London 1981.

→ division of labour, domestic labour debate, family work/domestic labour/housework, feminism, labour, labour-time, patriarchy, poverty/wealth, total labour, women's movement

→ Arbeit, Arbeitsteilung, Arbeitszeit, Armut/Reichtum, Familienarbeit/Hausarbeit, Feminismus, Frauenbewegung, Gesamtarbeit, Hausarbeitsdebatte, Patriarchat

CHAPTER 12

Division of Labour

A: taqsīm al-ʿamal. – F: division du travail. – G: Arbeitsteilung. – R: razdelenie truda. – S: división del trabajo. – C: fēngōng 分工

Divide and rule also applies in the production of material life: the division (specialisation and distribution) of labour is the decisive starting point for all more complex forms of domination and particular property. Production based on the private DL is necessarily production of commodities. As a prerequisite for the development of forces of production and social wealth, it also creates a system of divisions and objectified dependencies that subsume the alienated labourers. Within this framework of contradictions **Marx** reconstructs the development of the DL. As the major DLs he names those between man and woman, between town and country, between head and hand. To this end, he distinguishes between the various sections of the total social labour and the internal DL within production. His perspective is that of the sublation of the major DLs and the quantitative and qualitative raising of the productivity of labour to a level that allows individuals to alternate between kinds of labour, to choose them freely in their temporal extension, and which no longer couples their assignment to any social hierarchy and tends to make all labour general labour.

1. Alongside the productivity-enhancing effect of specialisation, ancient philosophy emphasises the socialisation effect and the structure of domination in the DL. **Xenophon**'s Οἰκονομικός 'is structured as a grand analysis of the art of commanding' (**Foucault** 1985, 153). Among other things, the gendered DL (of the spouses) is determined in relation to spaces – interior (under the roof) and exterior (in the field, in politics, and in war) – which entail different commanding powers. In **Plato**'s Πολιτεία, **Socrates** develops the criteria for the social structure of the πόλις within the framework of the discussion of justice, starting from the question of what belongs to the satisfaction of needs. He presents the DL as a basic condition for a qualitatively developed standard of living, distinguishing an elementary-necessary DL from a DL conditioned by luxury needs. From the differentiation of the DL and from the potential for conflict that it entails, he derives the necessity for political domination and military armament. Here, DL stands for an unsorted ensemble of economic sectors, professions, classes, and ruling powers. Philosophy is responsible for coherence and education is responsible for the initiation into philosophy.

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_013
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

For **Aristotle**, DL is constitutive of κοινωνία, i.e. the body politic considered as a community: 'For no community comes into existence out of two doctors but rather out of a doctor and a farmer and, in general, out of those who are different and not equal. But these [differing types] must be equalized [in exchange relationships]' (*EN*, 1133a17 et sq., 2011, 100). The equalisation in the form of the reciprocity of give and take in the system of DL is the decisive cohesive factor of the polis: 'But reciprocity is what holds them together' – τῷ ἀντιποιεῖν γὰρ ἀνάλογον συμμένει ἡ πόλις (*EN*, 1132b34). – **Thomas Aquinas** deduces from the DL, first the necessity of directorship [*Leitung*], then of domination: 'Again, in all arts and powers, those who can direct others well are more deserving of praise than are those who conduct themselves well under the direction of another' (*De regimine principum*, I.9, 2002, 28). As with **Aristotle**, the architect literally stands for the ruling assembler of the specialised sub-techniques. *Suum cuique* – partition of the appropriate things – defines justice. The cosmos is a mirror of a just DL and distribution: 'the different species of things are distributed in the various parts of the world: the stars in the heaven, birds in the air, fish in the waters, animals on the earth' (2002, 38).

The early capitalist urban bourgeoisie of the early modern period drives specialisation based on the DL forward. However, it would still be centuries before the capitalist mode of production would find its adequate theoretical expression. David **Hume** derives the 'partition of employments' (DL), which he distinguishes from the 'conjunction of forces' (cooperation), from the fact that people develop more needs than they can satisfy through individual effort: 'By the conjunction of forces our power is augmented; by the partition of employments our ability increases; and by mutual succour we are less exposed to fortune and accidents'. At the same time, he refers to the individual's ability to develop, which is made possible by specialisation, which presupposes a DL (1740, vol. III, p. II, sect. II).

Durkheim assumes that Adam **Smith** was the first to try to grasp the 'law' of the DL theoretically, and that it was he 'who first coined the term' (1984, 1). Smith begins his classical account in *Wealth of Nations* (1776) with the question of the reasons for the increase of the 'productive powers of labour' and understands them as *the effect, not the purpose of* the DL. He gives the example of the needle manufactory (which reappears in **Marx**), whose productivity is 20 times greater than that of individual handicraft production due to the internal DL and specialisation. He explains the choice of this example by the relatively small size of the needle manufactory, which allows a *spectator* to perceive the DL directly in a single room in a sensory manner, which is no longer possible in large-scale industry due to the fact that it is spread throughout various halls, companies or even sectors. **Smith** correlates the expansion of the DL with that

of the market. He expresses the fact that production based on the DL is commodity production in which subsistence production is marginalised as follows: '*Every man* [...] becomes in some measure a *merchant*, and the society grows to what is properly a *commercial society*' (ch. 4). As the DL abolishes use-value autarky, in order to be able to satisfy their needs everyone must have the means to do so that 'derive from the labour of other people'. All of a sudden, this becomes command over (alien) labour: 'and he must be rich or poor according to the quantity of that labour which he can *command*, or which he can afford to *purchase*' (ch. 5). Whereas the domination over alien labour is hidden under the symmetrical exchange of products of one's own labour, Smith concurrently sees in the DL and exchange the condition for consensual sociality in the form of a socialisation effect upon the in themselves asocial egoisms: not *benevolence*, but well-understood self-interest leads others to give/do what is necessary for us.

2. According to Ali **Rattansi**, the perspective of the **Marx**ian early writings is that of the illusionary unconditional abolition of all DLs, because Marx in this phase still 'consistently conflated' DL and class and therefore could only imagine the abolition of class society as the abolition of the DL as such (1982, 56 et sqq. *et passim*). It is worth reconstructing these connections, as within the young Marx's illusionary excess there are effective critical potentials that help keep a clear view on the impoverishment of human abilities and the reproduction of domination in the system of the ingrained DLs.

2.1 The illusionary perspective is based first of all upon the discovery of an interested illusion of bourgeois economics: in 1843/44, when excerpting **List**, **Marx** comes across a blind spot with regard to the DL: 'Mr. **List** considers the completed bourgeois society to be the ideal to be striven for. He, who attaches so much importance to the DL, i.e. to the distribution of forces of production [...] is very careful not to come to the distribution of the sharing of pleasure, to the difference between the *various classes*. He distinguishes a field close to a city from a field far from it, but he does not distinguish the labourer from the master of labour, the masters of labour not among themselves. He makes the DL into a consensus, without abolishing [*aufheben*] the diametrically opposed interests that confront the various kinds of labour with one another. He is content with the *word*: "social labour"' (MEGA IV.2/529).

Marx, on the other hand, seeks to 'abolish the diametrically opposed interests that confront the various kinds of labour with one another'. In the sense of **Rattansi** one could say that he reads the co-existence of the divided-specialised labours as a contraposition, in a critical antithesis to the bourgeois economy. He

thus approaches the DL from the standpoint of the critique of domination. The unfolding of the problem in the *GI* corresponds to this logic: 'DL only becomes truly such from the moment when a division of material and mental labour appears' (MECW 5/44 et sq. [MEW 3/31]). Division here means 'cleavage' (cf. 47 [33]), super- and subordination, domination and antagonism. The prerequisites here are already horizontal DL, class opposition, and state.

2.2 **Marx** and **Engels** outline the nested connection between three major social DLs, which have the character of class antagonisms (the horizontal differentiation of specific productive functions is not a primary theme). The analysis is still underdeveloped and much must be deduced from the context. The first 'naturally-spontaneously evolved' [*naturwüchsig*] major DL is the 'production of life' (5/43 [3/29]) (man and woman); the other two are: the DL between town and country and the 'division of material and mental labour' (44 et sq. [31]). The relationship is thought to be one of reinforcing implications: 'The most important division of material and mental labour is the separation of town and country' (64 [50]).

2.2.1 *Gendered DL.* – It is located at the strategic starting points of Marxist theory: the authors of the *GI* explain coarsely and ambiguously that the DL 'was originally nothing but the DL in the sexual act, then the DL which develops spontaneously or "naturally" by virtue of natural predisposition (e.g., physical strength), needs, accidents, etc., etc.' (5/44 [3/31]). Therein resides the sharpness, polished away among the later ones, of grasping patriarchy as the first class rule in history. **Marx** regards this at the same time as the element of domination, the expansion of which led to slavery. 'This latent slavery in the family, though still very crude, is the first form of property, but even at this stage it corresponds perfectly to the definition of modern economists, who call it the power of disposing of the labour-power of others' (5/46 [4/32]). – In *Origin*, **Engels** will take up this idea again: 'the first class oppression' in history is 'that of the female sex by the male' (MECW 26/173 [MEW 21/68]). Domination is thus inscribed in the DL between the genders.

In the detailed analyses of labour under capitalism, gender-specific DL is only marginally mentioned. Here **Marx** traces above all how women – usually mentioned together with children – are included in the industrial capitalist production process (for example *C I*, 1976, 788 [MEW 23/665]). He emphasises how bourgeois society mocks its noble principles, destroys the hypocritically sanctified family, etc. (cf. *C I*, 305, 356, 380 et sq., 607 [23/212, 261, 285, 501, *et passim*]). Marx seems to agree with the prevailing view in the labour movement that the male labourer works for his own reproduction and that of his family, and must be paid accordingly. However, Marx considers the dissolu-

tion of the old patriarchal family linked to the mass industrial work of women, despite its terrible aspects, to be the point of passage for a radical transformation of gender relations: 'However terrible and disgusting the dissolution of the old family ties within the capitalist system may appear, large-scale industry, by assigning an important part in socially organized processes of production, outside the sphere of the domestic economy, to women, young persons and children of both sexes, does nevertheless create a new economic foundation for a higher form of the family and of relations between the sexes' (*C 1*, 620 et sq. [23/514]). The gender-specific DL appears to him at first as a division on a 'purely physiological foundation', which through exchange turns into interdependent branches (471 [372]). At this point, he does not further pursue the crucial arrangement of these spheres for the capitalist model of civilisation, just as he does not inquire into the future concerning what is to happen to the kinds of labour not included in industrial development (such as the nurturing and caring of human offspring). Nevertheless, a number of notebooks (*Ethnol Nbks*) belonging to the last period of his life reveal him to have been interested in a microsociology of gender relations as production and property relations within the village.

2.2.2 *Town and country*. In his critique of **Proudhon** (*Poverty*, MECW 6/179 et sqq. [MEW 4/145 et sqq.]), **Marx** calls the separation of town and country 'the first big DL'. 'In proportion as this one relation of town and country was modified, the whole of society was modified' (179 [145]). – In the *18th Brumaire*, he analyses the rural mode of production in terms of its isolating effect on the peasants, cutting them off from one another 'instead of bringing them into mutual intercourse' (MECW 11/187 [MEW 8/198]), deriving from this their inability to pursue independent class politics: 'They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented'. (Cf. Volker **Braun**'s play, *Großer Frieden*, Texte 5, 262: 'Separated by his work, which shackles him / Behind his wood that he presses into the soil. A small realm, eh. From morning to morning. / And further he knows no one. […] Where / does he have his office. The peasant cannot represent himself.') Not only the spatial dispersion over the surface of the earth, but also the small internal DL contributes to this effect. 'Their field of production […] admits of no DL in its cultivation, no application of science and, therefore, no diversity of development, no variety of talent, no wealth of social relationships' (*18.B*, MECW 11/187 [MEW 8/198]). – In *AD*, **Engels** polemicises against the notion of the naturalness of the urban-rural opposition, emphasises the one-sidedness of both rural and industrial activities and recalls that both **Fourier** and **Owen** demanded the 'abolition of the antithesis between town and country […] as the first basic prerequisite for the abolition of the old DL altogether' (MECW 25/278 [MEW 20/272 et sq.]).

In *C III*, **Marx** demonstrates that what is considered agricultural labour following its separation from industrial labour is itself a product of social development. In both cases, socially necessary products are produced; both are proportional parts of the total social labour time (*C III*, 1981, 771 et sqq. [MEW 25/646 et sqq.]). Of central interest to him within this context is the transformation of agricultural products into commodities in relation to the growing power of landowners.

2.2.3 *Head and hand.* – In the *GI*, **Marx** and **Engels** see an interdependence between the emergence of enduring domination (i.e. in a developed form: state-reproduced class rule) and the 'division of material and mental labour'. It can be said therefore, that it is initially at this point that the 'DL [...] becomes truly such' (MECW 5/44 et sq. [MEW 3/31]). In *Capital*, the analysis is extended to include the sphere of control of the labour process and the question of the organisation of labour. One aspect of the dimension of control is the division of hand and head work, which was already central in the *GI* in connection to the development of specialised intellectuals and the ideological character of state-reproduced class society (cf. ibid.). The process traverses all domains and hierarchical levels of the social structure: 'The DL, which we already saw [...] as one of the chief forces of history up till now, manifests itself also in the ruling class as the division of mental and material labour, so that inside this class one part appears as the thinkers of the class [...], while the others' attitude to these ideas and illusions is more passive and receptive, because they are in reality the active members of this class and have less time to make up illusions and ideas about themselves' (MECW 5/59 et sq. [3/46 et sq.]). However, within the ruling classes and strata, this does not necessarily imply the preponderance of ideologues over "men of action"; rather, the opposite is often the case.

Within material production, on the contrary, the separated "intellectual" functions are as a rule also *dispositive* in character, the "material" functions *executive*. In contrast to the early writings, *Capital* analyses the coalescence of formation-specific dimensions with functions separated by the DL, such as the 'double nature' of 'the work of supervision and management'. On the one hand, this kind of work 'necessarily arises' where cooperation – especially in the DL – occurs on a larger scale, whereby independently of relations of domination, what is conceived as management is 'the interconnection and unity of the process [...] represented in a governing will', that is 'productive labour that has to be performed in any combined mode of production'. On the other hand, there are types and dimensions of 'supervision' that are 'based on opposition between the worker as direct producer and the proprietor of the means of production. The greater this opposition, the greater the role that this work of supervision plays. It reaches its high point in the slave system' (*C III*, 1981, 507 et

sq. [25/397]). In order for the functionary to remain as the conductor of these processes, he must first be separated from the capitalist form of management analytically, and later in a practical revolutionary way.

The division between executive and supervising work is also of interest as a problem within the working class. The overseers 'are not genuine workingmen; they are deserters from their class' writes the early **Engels** (*Condition*, MECW 4/461 [MEW 2/393]). In *C I*, **Marx** comprises the delegation of directing functions by the capitalist in a wider developmental connection, leaving this narrow interpretation behind: 'Just as at first the capitalist is relieved from actual labour as soon as his capital has reached that minimum amount with which capitalist production, properly speaking, first begins, so now he hands over the work of direct and constant supervision of the individual workers and groups of workers to a special kind of wage-labourer. An industrial army of workers under the command of a capitalist requires, like a real army, officers (managers) and N.C.O.s (foremen, overseers), who command during the labour process in the name of capital' (*C I*, 1976, 450 [MEW 23/351]). In the differentiated system of management, the internal DL is superimposed with domination.

3. **Marx** analyses industrial labour and its prospects for development in view of the contradiction between development and domination and under the dominance of the separation of physical and mental labour.

3.1 The early **Engels** sees the DL as one of the 'three great levers' (besides the application of water and especially steam, and the application of machinery) 'with which manufacture, since the middle of the last century, has been busy putting the world out of joint' (*Condition*, MECW 4/325 [MEW 2/254]). He understands the process of factory DL as a kind of levelling out or proletarianisation process and as a prerequisite for the further development of the machinery itself, especially during the transition from manufacture to large-scale industry: 'Hand-work was carried on after the fashion of factory work, the DL was strictly applied, and small employers [...] were forced down into the proletariat' (321 [250 et sq.]).

3.2 *Internal DL*. – **Marx** integrates these observations into the substantially further developed theoretical framework of *C I*. He commences with the manufactural intensification of internal DL towards specialisation into individual partial operations, which he comprehends as 'systematic' DL (in contrast to the natural DL of traditional handicraft) (cf. *C I*, 1976, 456 [MEW 23/357]). Work activity tends to be restricted to 'continued repetition of the same narrowly defined act' (458 [359]). 'The mode in which manufacture arises, its growth

out of handicrafts, is therefore twofold. [...] On the one hand, therefore, manufacture either introduces DL into a process of production, or further develops that division; on the other hand it combines together handicrafts that were formerly separate. But whatever may have been its particular starting-point, its final form is always the same – a productive mechanism whose organs are human beings' (457 [358]). – The mechanisation made possible by this, with its abolition of the handicraft basis of the production process, enables the natural and technological sciences to enter into production: 'The solid crystallization of a hierarchy of specialized processes, which arose from the old DL, ceases to exist; it is dissolved, and makes way for constant changes' (590 [485]). Under the conditions of the separation of material and mental labour, the latter initially has devastating consequences for the workers: unskilled (cheap) labour power becomes, so to speak, a branch of the DL in its own right and enters into competition with skilled labour: 'In contrast with the period of manufacture; the DL is now based, wherever possible, on the employment of women, of children of all ages and of unskilful workers' (ibid. [ibid.] transl. corr.).

3.3 *Vertical and horizontal DL.* – In order to consider the combination of all suboperations, **Marx** introduces the concept of the collective labourer in the sense of the 'combination of workers, each of whom stands at a different distance from the actual manipulation of the object of labour' (*C I*, 1976, 643 [MEW 23/531]). This phrase makes it possible to regard disjointed functions as parts of social collective labour. This also tends to apply to education or domestic labour, which is excluded from the capitalist standpoint of the production of surplus value and therefore remains not thought through when Marx attempts to understand this standpoint. – To the extent that under capitalist directorship [*Leitung*] a function of domination overdetermines the horizontal function of the DL, an ideological dissimulation [*Entnennung*] of domination comes about disguised as vertical DL (for criticism see W.F. **Haug** 1993, 98 *et passim*). – In the *GI*, **Marx** conceives of the political sphere as an expression of the DL's dominating character. Whereas 'previous revolutions within the framework of DL were bound to lead to new political institutions', he assumes that the proletarian one, 'which removes the DL, ultimately abolishes political institutions' (MECW 5/380 [MEW 3/64]). Attached to this conception is the well-known phrase: 'the proletarians [...] to assert themselves as individuals, they must overthrow the state' (5/80 [3/77]).

In Emile **Durkheim**'s work the *disguise of domination as labour* takes a special turn reminiscent of **Aristotle:** he levels and harmonises all DLs by deriving them from their moral function, expressly directing himself against economic thinking: DL creates solidarity without which there can be no society. The

paradigm is the sexual DL as 'the source of conjugal solidarity' (1984, 18). DL 'constitutes the establishment of a social and moral order *sui generis*. Individuals are linked to one another who would otherwise be independent; instead of developing separately, they concert their efforts. They are solidly tied to one another' (21). DL is a condition of the existence of society.

3.4 *Historical trends in the development of the DL.* – **Marx** examines the development of the DL also in regards to its consequences for individuals, as pathology of one-sidedness and conversely as possibility for many-sidedness and change.

3.4.1 *Pathology of the DL.* – In *Ms 44*, **Marx** is first of all concerned with the increasing one-sidedness of the worker-individual through the development of machinery: 'as he is thus depressed spiritually and physically to the condition of a machine and from being a man becomes an abstract activity and a belly' (MECW 3/237 et sq. [MEGA I.2/198]). (Language and context are further elaborated in Volker **Braun**'s 1965 play *Die Kipper*, Texte 1). Since the DL makes the worker himself a 'machine', he can be confronted by the machine as a competitor (MECW 3/238 [MEGA I.2/200 et sq.]). He speaks of the reciprocal entanglement as an upsurge (237 [197]). In short: 'The *DL* is the economic expression of the *social character of labour* within the estrangement. [...] [DL] is therefore nothing else but the *estranged, alienated* positing of human activity as a *real activity of the species* or as *activity of man as a species-being*' (317 [I.2/429]). In *Comments on James Mill*, the development of civilisation and that of the estranging DL is elaborated as the interrelated opposite to the '*unity* of human labour' (MECW 3/220 et sq. [MEW 40/455; MEGA IV.2/456).

3.4.2 *Contradictions of the DL in capitalism: one-sided/many-sided.* In *Capital*, **Marx** shifts the general equation of alienation, DL, and the impoverishment of human activity, discussed in the early writings, in favour of an analysis in which this is brought together with the capitalist operated development of the machinery, and in which the 'generality of labour' and the change of types of work by individuals is not elaborated as a humanistic wish but as a developmental dynamic of the industrial mode of production, hence also of capitalism itself: 'But if, at present, variation of labour imposes itself after the manner of an overpowering natural law, and with the blindly destructive action of a natural law [...], large-scale industry, through its very catastrophes, makes the recognition of variation of labour and hence of the fitness of the worker for the maximum number of different kinds of labour into a question of life and death. This possibility of varying labour must become a general law of social production, and the existing relations must be adapted to permit its realization in practice. That monstrosity, the disposable working population held in reserve, in misery, for the changing requirements of capitalist exploitation,

must be replaced by the individual man who is absolutely available for the different kinds of labour required of him; the partially developed individual, who is merely the bearer of one specialized social function, must be replaced by the totally developed individual, for whom the different social functions are different modes of activity he takes up in turn' (*C I*, 1976, 618 [MEW 23/511 et sq.]). Marx considers it undeniable 'that those revolutionary ferments whose goal is the abolition of the old DL stand in diametrical contradiction with the capitalist form of production, and the economic situation of the workers which corresponds to that form' (619 [ibid.]).

3.5 *Perspective of the abolition of the DL.* – A revolution in the relations of production that does not comprise the corresponding structures of the DL that sustain them is unthinkable for **Marx**. The strategic dimensions through which a dominating as opposed to horizontal DL is depicted include: the domination of non-workers (e.g. owners, rentiers, entrepreneurs) over workers; the development of collective labour at the expense of the underdevelopment of particular workers; the emergence of a full socialisation of labour without the consciousness and corresponding political action of the total labour force. The aforementioned can essentially be grasped as the consequences of the separation and hierarchisation of dispositive and executive activities combined with antagonistic relations of appropriation: speaking in abbreviated terms, Marx therefore refers to the separation of mental and manual labour as the core dimension.

3.5.1 Accordingly, the authors of the *GI* draft the perspective of the abolition of the DL, or more precisely: the subsumption of individuals under it, 'as long, therefore, as activity is not voluntarily, but naturally, divided, man's own deed becomes an alien power opposed to him, which enslaves him instead of being controlled by him. For as soon as the DL comes into being, each man has a particular, exclusive sphere of activity, which is forced upon him and from which he cannot escape. He is a hunter, a fisherman, a shepherd, or a critical critic, and must remain so if he does not want to lose his means of livelihood'. The sentence is continued with the famous phrase (after **Fourier**) about communist society: 'where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, [...] without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, shepherd or critic' (MECW 5/47 [MEW 3/33]).

3.5.2 In *Capital*, this **Fourier**ean perspective is underpinned by an analysis of the conditions of its realisation. **Marx** now takes aim at the mobility of individuals within the general distribution of labour in order to maximise at given

productivity 'the time at society's disposal for the free intellectual and social activity of the individual' (*C I*, 1976, 667 [MEW 23/552]).

3.5.3 Referring to **Fourier** and **Owen** and against **Dühring**, **Engels** in *AD* summarises these perspectives: 'The old mode of production must therefore be revolutionised from top to bottom, and in particular the former DL must disappear. Its place must be taken by an organisation of production in which, on the one hand, no individual can throw on the shoulders of others his share in productive labour, this natural condition of human existence; and in which, on the other hand, productive labour, [...] by offering each individual the opportunity to develop all his faculties, physical and mental, [...] will become a pleasure instead of being a burden' (MECW 25/279 et sq. [MEW 20/273 et sq.; MEGA I.27/455]).

Remark. – **Marx** had in many regards underestimated the flexibility of capitalist modes of production, including the question of the form-specificity of the DL. An essential element of management strategies under high-technological conditions is precisely the dismantling of the hierarchical DL and the support of the development of individual workers, all of which Marx understood as revolutionary ferment. Admittedly, such development within capitalist production takes place in the fetters of the conditions of valorisation that continue to be driven by the world market in a spontaneous-natural, antagonistic and crisis-ridden manner, and at the expense of growing structural unemployment.

The highly industrialised countries have in the meantime advanced the development of the forces of production to such an extent that the new mode of production has both permitted and compelled a number of displacements within the major DLs. This applies in particular to the separation of mental and manual labour and the division between male and female labour. The advent of microelectronics in the production and administrative process has revived the debate on DL. As all work tends to become information processing activity, all workers correspondingly tend to become 'heads', and thus questions of control and domination are instated anew on the agenda (cf. inter alia **PAQ** 1987). The DL is unsettled on every organisational level (in industrial sociology one already speaks of an 'end of DL' – according to **Kern**/**Schumann** 1984). A restructuring of hierarchical relationships within the workplace is under way; the shift in the types of labour and the extensive amount of time that one has to their own disposal are just as widespread as is a general education for workers.

Dismantling of the DL can be hampered by the resistance of the workers. The working class is not a harmoniously structured totality, but consists rather of individual groups of workers that seal themselves off from each other – some groups fight each other culturally. These divisions contribute to the reproduction of the social collective labourer in hierarchical order, and with the old DL,

the division of the working class itself. The DL is also mediated in each instance through the actions of the workers themselves; they must realise it for themselves and modify it in the process (cf. inter alia **Willis** 1977/2011, **PAQ** 1987, **Brosius**/**Haug** 1987, **Cockburn** 1985).

4. **Lenin** continues with the **Marx**ian logic of contradictions and initially also designates the destruction of handicraft DL as progress (CW 2/187). Being a practical politician, he shifts the accent to the resistance of the workers' crafts and trade unions. 'Capitalism inevitably leaves socialism the legacy, on the one hand, of the old trade and craft distinctions among the workers, distinctions evolved in the course of centuries; on the other hand, trade unions, which only very slowly, […] will develop into broader industrial unions with less of the craft union about them […], and later proceed, through these industrial unions, to eliminate the DL among people […]. To attempt in practice, today, to anticipate this future result […] would be like trying to teach higher mathematics to a child of four' (CW 31/49 et sq.).

A particularly major problem in Russia at the beginning of the 20th cent. presents itself in the DL between town and country. In various writings, **Lenin** – in elaboration of **Marx**'s remarks on the emergence of internal and external markets (*C III*, 1981 [MEW 25]) – depicts the transformation of the patriarchal homogeneous natural economy into capitalist commodity-producing agriculture (cf. CW 3/37 et sqq.). **Lenin** examines how 'there gradually emerge from the peasant population stronger individuals, stronger families' (CW 1/120). He quotes a report that to begin with designates physical foundations: bodily strength and health, many sons; followed by common family property in the case of industrial work by family members not needed for field work, independence from financial backers and gradual hiring of impoverished peasants as 'domestic workers'; and finally, trade with the city as well as the freeing of labour time of female members of the household from spinning and weaving for their own needs to the production of lace for the market (CW 1/120 et sqq.).

4.1 The developments following the October Revolution in Russia of 1917, famine, and from 1930 onwards, massive industrialisation, were not well suited to accommodate the impulses toward the sublation of the DLs and their arrangement within society as a whole. – Rainer **Land** sees the key to the ensuing development in the fact that the Soviet leadership, even under **Lenin**, had decided to pursue primary industrialisation immediately in Fordist and Taylorist form. This promoted the 'reduction of production work to regimented apprentice work with simultaneous outsourcing and centralisation of qualified competences in superordinate engineering positions or corresponding leading posi-

tions' (W.F. **Haug** 1993b, 128). – Almost two generations later, the perestroika found itself confronted with the sheer insoluble problem of the 'subjective factor'. In order to combat the consequences of the rigid system of the DL, **Gorbachev** declared in 1986: 'On the agenda is [...] the *creation of a uniform system of uninterrupted education*' (cit. in W.F. **Haug** 1989).

4.2 *DL in socialist literature*. – While still under the relatively stable period of state socialism, another "DL" became the focal point of passionate discussion in this field: that between government and people, between those "authorised" and "unauthorised", "responsible" and "incompetent". In particular, Volker **Braun** and Heiner **Müller** compose a kind of tragedy that besets the countries of authoritarian socialism, whereby a state caste prefigures the experiences that the others are to make. – Rudolf **Bahro** wrote – with reference to **Engels** – sharp-sightedly on this problem: as long as work still took up almost all of the time of the members of society, 'the increase in forces of production, the expansion of transport, the development of the state and law, the establishment of art and science is only possible by means of an increased DL, which must have as its basis the great DL between the masses who do the simple manual labour and the privileged ones in the management of labour, trade, affairs of the state, and later in the pursuit of art and science. There simply had to be a special class which, freed from real work, took care of those common affairs of society for which the actual producers had no time' (1977, 164). The nomenclature constituted itself as this special class within the framework of state socialist DL. – In the upheaval of 1989 there existed for a brief moment an anticipating glimpse of the possibilities, and liberation of capabilities and life that the sublation of such a "DL" would render conceivable.

5. *Feminist critique of the DL* – Criticism of the gender-specific DL came from the women's movement of the early 1970s and continues. – Mariarosa **Dalla Costa** scandalised a social DL in which the relation between the two genders (heterosexuality), given the physical separation of the sexes through work, had to be lived as an act of disciplining and thus was prevented from developing into a humane relationship. She calls this the 'homosexuality of the DL' (1975, 31): 'But homosexuality generally is at the same time rooted in the framework of capitalist society itself: women at home and men in factories and offices, separated one from the other for the whole day; or a typical factory of 1,000 women with 10 foremen or a typing pool (of women, of course) which works for 50 professional men. All these situations are already a homosexual framework of living' (32). – Dorothy **Smith** (1979), following **Marx** and **Hegel**, elaborates the invisibility of women's work as the key to understanding the 'disembod-

ied' sciences. Just as for **Hegel**, the lord's consciousness is determined by the fact that the bondsman works for the lord's reproduction, so too is the routine labour of women for the body of male scientists one that is presupposed and thus not included in their thinking. In the young history of scientific feminism, this kind of a DL was, on the one hand, pursued further as a criticism of the male concept of reason (e.g. **Conrad**/**Konnertz** 1986; **List**/**Studer** 1989), of 'head births' (**Neusüß** 1985); whilst on the other, there is an increasing number of literary treatments of such divided thought-feelings deriving especially from state-socialist countries (e.g. Monika **Maron** 1988; Helga **Königsdorf** 1988; Irmtraud **Morgner** 2000; Christa **Wolf** 1989) – The question of the gender-specific DL and its consequences became a central element of the women's movement and an essential dimension of women's studies. It dealt with the specific qualifications of women in a double labour process (Anke **Wolf-Graaf** 1981; Regina **Becker-Schmidt** 1983). Double burden became the keyword for trade union-oriented thinking and action, and the discussions regarding the 'difference' of women refer, among other things, to their differing social situatedness in society due to the DL. Socialist feminists elaborated that this DL in connection with the DL of head and hand, along with the separation of the political from the private, forms the foundation of the ever-reproducing oppression of women and of gender relations (Frigga **Haug** 1991). The DL of the sexes as the basis of the theorisation of the oppression of women can be found, among many others, in Ursula **Beer** (1984) and Hildegard **Heise** (1986).

6. **Marx**'s chapters on the working day and on machinery and large-scale industry (*C I*, 1976, ch. 10 and 15 [MEW 23, ch. 8 and 13]) with their many examples from factory reports have entered international industrial sociology. The separation of manual and mental labour has determined this discipline to such an extent that the involvement of elements of mental labour in all instances of manual labour has been largely overlooked, and labour thinking should therefore be included in the analysis.

In general, the idea of the separation of manual and mental labour discovered fertile ground in the Marxism of the student movement; this led, among other things, to the relatively major influence of Alfred **Sohn-Rethel**'s late work *Intellectual and Manual Labour* (first pub. in Ger. 1970) among leftist intellectuals. His main argument is that the separation of the types of labour is not simply a DL, but the logic of a mode of production in which intellectual labour, due to 'the forms of appropriation in commodity exchange' (1970, 95) becomes independent [*verselbständigen*] from manual labour. Sohn-Rethel's analysis is grounded on Taylorism: 'By virtue of its operative measure with the machine functions, manual labour is thus socialised in the continuous labour

process to a degree that allows it to establish equality of level with the scientific form of thought' (160). The rapid development of computer-assisted production has practically rendered Sohn-Rethel's conclusions obsolete.

New divisions have emerged in what **Marx** analysed in principle as a reserve army and surplus population, but which were not however anticipated in their contemporary form: a split runs unevenly through the world economy, between workers and those who cannot find work, going far beyond what is defined by the concept 'industrial reserve army'. Moreover, the army of the unemployed and those left behind or marginalised by social development (up to one third of society as a whole within western industrialised societies and about two thirds of the world population) no longer seem to have the function of being brought back into the production process, whereby depending on the conjectural situation – these populations remain permanently 'superfluous'. In addition to the aforementioned comes the 'division' between the countries of the First World and the poverty-stricken worlds of the South and East. – A radical challenge to the old system of the DL is currently emerging from within the women's movement. Feminists proceed from the premise that humanity's most pressing questions – the ecological question, the irrational growth of forces of production and destruction, the waste of natural resources, the devastation of the globe – are generated by a mode of production resting on a gender-specific DL. Such a mode of production merely develops and produces that which generates profit, thus neglecting or leaving to marginalised women most of what is essential to human and natural life. Not only the inclusion of women in the economy and the public sphere, but more importantly, the inclusion of the male sex in reproductive work (encompassing social and ecological matters) constitutes a late contribution to the survival of human beings and the preservation of an Earth inhabitable by them.

Frigga Haug
Translated by Kolja Swingle

Bibliography

Th. **Aquinas**, *Political Writings*, ed. R.W. Dyson, Cambridge 2002.

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, transl. R.C. Bartlett and S.D. Collins, Chicago 2011.

R. **Bahro**, *Die Alternative*, Frankfurt/M 1977.

R. **Becker-Schmidt** et al., *Arbeitsleben – Lebensarbeit: Konflikte und Erfahrungen von Fabrikarbeiterinnen*, Bonn 1983.

U. **Beer**, *Theorien geschlechtlicher Arbeitsteilung*, Frankfurt/M 1984.

G. **Brosius**, F. **Haug** (eds.), *Frauen/Männer/Computer*, Berlin/W 1987.

C. **Cockburn**, *Machinery of Dominance: Women, Men, and Technical Know-How*, London 1985.

J. **Conrad**, U. **Konnertz**, *Weiblichkeit in der Moderne*, Tübingen 1986.

M. **Dalla Costa**, 'Women and the Subversion of the Community', ed. M. Dalla Costa, S. James, *The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community*, Bristol 1975, 21–56.

E. **Durkheim**, *The Division of Labour in Society*, transl. W.D. Halls, Basingstoke 1984.

M. **Foucault**, *The Use of Pleasure*, vol. II of *The History of Sexuality*, transl. R. Hurley, New York 1985.

S. **Harding**, *The Science Question in Feminism*, Ithaca 1986.

N. **Hartsock**, *Money, Sex and Power*, New York 1983.

F. **Haug**, 'Zur Aktualität von Marxismus-Feminismus', *Sozialismus in Europa*, Essen 1990.

F. **Haug**, 'Ökonomie der Zeit, darin löst sich schließlich alle Ökonomie auf: Neue Herausforderungen an einen sozialistischen Feminismus', *Das Argument*, vol. 32, 1990, no. 184, 879–95.

W.F. **Haug**, *Gorbatschow, Versuch über den Zusammenhang seiner Gedanken*, Berlin/W 1989.

W.F. **Haug**, 'Arbeitsteilung und Ideologie', *Elemente einer Theorie des Ideologischen*, Hamburg 1993, 91–115.

W.F. **Haug**, *Determinanten der postkommunistischen Situation*, AS 218, Hamburg 1993 (cited b).

H. **Heise**, *Flucht vor der Widersprüchlichkeit: Kapitalistische Produktionsweise und Geschlechterbeziehung*, Frankfurt/M-New York 1986.

D. **Hume**, 'Of the Origin of Justice and Property', *Treatise of Human Nature*, vol. III, 1740.

H. **Kern**, M. **Schumann**, *Das Ende der Arbeitsteilung*?, Munich 1984.

H. **Königsdorf**, *Lichtverhältnisse*, Berlin/GDR 1988.

R. **Land**, 'Fordismus plus Planwirtschaft', ed. M. Brie, E. Böhlke, *Russland wieder im Dunkeln*, Berlin/W 1992, 49–59.

E. **List**, H. **Studer** (eds.), *Denkverhältnisse: Feminismus und Kritik*, Frankfurt/M 1989.

M. **Maron**, *The Defector*, London 1988.

K. **Marx**, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy. Volume I*, transl. B. Fowkes, London 1976.

K. **Marx**, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy. Volume III*, transl. D. Fernbach, London 1981.

K. **Marx**, F. **Engels**, *Marx and Engels Collected Works*, 50 vols., Moscow-London-New York, 1975–2005.

I. **Morgner**, *The Life and Adventures of Trobadora Beatrice as Chronicled by Her Minstrel Laura*, transl. J. Clausen, Nebraska 2000.

I. **Morgner**, *Amanda: Ein Hexenroman*, Berlin/GDR 1983.
C. **Neusüß**, *Die Kopfgeburten der Arbeiterbewegung*, Hamburg 1987.
Projekt Automation und Qualifikation (PAQ), *Widersprüche der Automationsarbeit*, Berlin/W 1987.
A. **Rattansi**, *Marx and the Division of Labour*, London 1982.
L. **Sargent** (ed.), *Women and Revolution*, Boston 1981.
D. **Smith**, 'A Sociology for Women', ed. J. Sherman, E.T. Beck, *The Prism of Sex: Essays in the Sociology of Knowledge*, Madison 1979, 135–87.
A. **Sohn-Rethel**, *Geistige und körperliche Arbeit: Zur Theorie der gesellschaftlichen Synthesis* [Intellectual and Manual Labour], 1st Ger. edn., Frankfurt/M 1970.
P. **Willis**, *Learning to Labour: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs* (1977), Franham 2011.
C. **Wolf**, *Accident: A Day's News*, transl. H. Schwarzbauer and R. Takvorian, London 1989.
A. **Wolf-Graaf**, *Frauenarbeit im Abseits: Frauenbewegung und weibliches Arbeitsvermögen*, Munich 1981.
K. **Young** et al., *Of Marriage and the Market*, London 1981.

→ agrarian question, automation, civilisation, class analysis, collective labourer, cooperation, dialectics, direction, discipline, double burden, education/formation, elements of the new society, enjoyment, exploitation, factory, family work/domestic labour/housework, female labour/women's labour, Fordism, gender relations, general labour/universal labour, humanisation of work, imperialism, industrial reserve army, intellectuals, international division of labour, labour market, labour movement, labour politics, labour time, leisure, management/co-management, mental and manual labour, mind and hand, nomenclature, peasants, polytechnic education, profession, qualification, reproduction, scientific-technological revolution, skilled worker, Taylorism, technical progress, technical/technological revolution/s, theory of ideology, trade unions, unemployment, urban/rural, wage labour, women's emancipation, work/labour

→ Agrarfrage, allgemeine Arbeit, Arbeit, Arbeiterbewegung, Arbeitslosigkeit, Arbeitsmarkt, Arbeitspolitik, Arbeitszeit, Ausbeutung, Automation, Bauern, Beruf, Bildung, Dialektik, Disziplin, Doppelbelastung, Elemente der neuen Gesellschaft, Fabrik, Facharbeiter, Familienarbeit/Hausarbeit, Fordismus, Frauenarbeit, Frauenemanzipation, Freizeit, geistige und körperliche Arbeit, Genuss, Gesamtarbeiter, Geschlechterverhältnisse, Gewerkschaften, Humanisierung der Arbeit, Ideologietheorie, Imperialismus, industrielle Reservearmee, Intel-

lektuelle, internationale Arbeitsteilung, Klassenanalyse, Kooperation, Kopf und Hand, Leitung, Lohnarbeit, Management/Co-Management, Nomenklatura, polytechnische Bildung, Qualifikation, Reproduktion, Stadt/Land, Taylorismus, Technikentwicklung/technische Revolutionen, technischer Fortschritt, wissenschaftlich-technische Revolution, Zivilisation

CHAPTER 13

Eurocentrism

A: markazīya ʾūrubbīya. – F: eurocentrisme. – G: Eurozentrismus. – R: evrocentrizm. – S: eurocentrismo. – C: Ōuzhōu zhōngxīn zhǔyì 欧洲中心主义

E correlates to the false universalism that uncritically takes the patterns of Western European capitalist civilisation and history as the standard for all human history and civilisation. E can be understood as a more or less spontaneous "cultural imperialism" (**Said** 1993) that has grown over centuries of European world conquest. Thereby "Europe" stands for the rise and expansion of the 'world system' (**Wallerstein**) of the capitalist mode of production. Its rationality and form of individuality, its accumulation mechanisms, its forces of production and its products, from science and technology to nationalism, have made its global triumph possible. In the 20th cent., during which capitalist powers fought world wars for global domination, the centre has increasingly shifted to the USA with the consequence that 'the term *West* can be used interchangeably with the term *Europe*' (**Gran** 1996, 3), irrespective of the fact that Japan and other Asian powers are gaining hegemonic positions. As if to confirm **Hegel**'s parable of the owl of Minerva, the term appears in the "twilight" of European centrality. Yet the continuing virulence that lies within the E mentality is indicated by the fact that the term 'almost never appears in the encyclopaedic handbooks and dictionaries' (**Malandrino** 1990, 950; indeed, it is equally absent from PhWb and HWPh, GG, KWM, and LS). World history is still written 'eurocentrically', i.e. 'in terms of elites, mainly Western elites' (**Gran** 1996, 1). Where E is pronounced, its spontaneous power is broken.

E is shaped by the history of colonialism and its claim of the supremacy of the European capitalist civilisation over the so-called Third World. Eurocentric thinking assigns culture in the emphatic sense only to Greco-Latin Europe. With its values in respect to family, science, and economics, E acts as an inhibiting factor for the development of humanity (cf. **Krumpel** 1992, 33). For Edward W. **Said** who criticises the E of the Western educated bourgeoisie, there is no 'purer example than this of dehumanised thought' than when the "West" articulates its claims to dominance over the "non-white world" by saying that '"it" is not quite as human as "we" are' (1981, 126). The non-European countries then appear either as 'exotics' that are completely different from "Europe" (or the "West") or as countries that conform or have already conformed to the ideal type of European society (cf. **Gran** 1996, 3; **Mall** 1995, 1–3).

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_014
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

1. In the wake of **Columbus**'s "discoveries" and the conquests that followed, 'Eurocentric-comparative standards of evaluation' developed (**Melber** 1991, 12). Even though the Enlightenment subjected the Occident's Christocentric claim to superiority, the missionary zeal of the Church and the cruelty of the colonial masters to a comprehensive critique (cf. **Dietsche** 1984, 105), it also universalised bourgeois patterns of rationality. It was generally assumed that the "savage" societies would, in the course of their history, "educate" themselves up to the European level of reason. Enlightenment rationalism and the classical philosophy of the 18th and early 19th cent.s are both universalistic, cosmopolitan, and 'group-centred, ethnocentric' (**Jouhy** 1985, 45; **Melber**/**Hauck** 1989, 10 et sq.). This ambivalence reflects the interests of the bourgeoisie, which propagates its particular emancipation goals as general ones, immediately misuses the pseudo-universalist orientations to legitimise its expansion, and conceals its interest in extra-economic violence in the colonies.

For **Voltaire**, the 'principle of universal reason' exists, but he regards the intelligence of Africans as 'very inferior' (cited in **Melber**/**Hauck** 1989, 9). **Condorcet**'s universalism of Enlightenment is on the one hand directed against 'our sanguinary contempt for men of a different complexion' by the European colonial powers and slaveholders (1795, 212), but one can also find statements of the superiority of European civilisation over 'the barbarity of African tribes, and the ignorance of savages' (210). Thus, 'the foreign individualities must necessarily appear as a historical more or less measured against one's own' (**Henn** 1988, 110 et sq.).

Kant dismisses the peoples who do not participate in the development of bourgeois society from human history in favour of the European peoples: 'The inhabitant of the temperate zone of the earth, especially in its central part, is more beautiful in body, harder working, more witty, more moderate in his passions, and more sensible than any other kind of people in the world. Consequently, these peoples have always taught the rest [of the world], and vanquished them by the use of weapons' (*Physical Geography*, § 4, 577). For **Hegel**, 'Europe presents on the whole, the centre and end of the old World and is absolutely the *West*', but in Asia there 'arose the Light of the Spirit and therefore the history of the World' (*PhilHist – PH*, 117). What is 'most remarkable in' Anterior Asia, 'this country has not kept for itself, but sent over to Europe. It presents the origination of all religious and political principles, but Europe has been the scene of their development' (120). In short: 'The History of the World goes from East to West, for Europe is absolutely the end of History' (121). – Hegel legitimises the violent European expansion. The 'right of the *heroes* to establish states' which the 'civilised nations' possess, allows them to regard and treat the independence of other peoples, who do not form European institutions and state

apparatuses, 'as merely formal' (*PhRight* § 350 et sq., 1991, 376). For him, Africa is 'no historical part of the World; it has no movement or development to exhibit' (*PhilHist – PH*, 117). From the standpoint of this 'complacent E' (**Davidson** 1995, 24), other cultures can be seen as "primitive" and "uncultivated" and treated accordingly. The universalist components are displaced by nation state particularism: 'The nation-state was destined to be a colonial state' (**Kristeva** 1991, 126).

2. The extent to which **Marx** breaks with the Eurocentric legacy is controversial. Maurice **Godelier** (1978) and Bill **Warren** (1980) are of the opinion that he considers the sequence of historical formations particular to Europe to be universally valid. But by depicting the epochs of the economic formation of society in *Pref 59* (MECW 29/263 et sq. [MEW 13/9]), this does not amount to an assertion that this was a necessary sequence of formations for each country. In *Intro 57*, a non-linear conception of history is hinted at (cf. MECW 28/38 et sqq. [MEW 42/36 et sqq.]), which later becomes more clearly outlined. The remark in the preface to the first edition of *C I* that the 'the country that is more developed industrially only shows, to the less developed, the image of its own future' (*C I*, 91 [MEW 23/12]) has been taken as evidence for the belief in a general 'predetermined direction' of history (**Laclau** 1982, 10), but that sentence is addressed to the German readers of 1867, who might have thought capitalism was something English (cf. **Haug** 1985, 41 et sqq.). *C I* (1867) notes on the expropriation of the peasants from the land as an essential element of this development: 'Its history takes on different colours in different countries and passes through the various phases in different orders' (MEGA II.5/576). In the French edition of *C I*, which **Marx** revised, in the corresponding passage of its final delivery (1875), he explicitly works against a reading in the sense of E, i.e. a false universalisation: He now determines the status of the chapter on 'so-called primitive accumulation' as that of a 'sketch' (*esquisse*). In a radical form, the expropriation of the peasants from their land has only taken place in England. 'Mais tous les autres pays de l'Europe occidentale parcourent le même mouvement', albeit in different forms or 'ordre de succession différent' (II.6/634). The area of validity is now explicitly narrowed to Western Europe, the E for Marx blown up. In the future he will (unjustly) expect that the change implemented in the French version (which **Engels** will not adopt in the 3rd German edition) will be noted by his readers all over the world. In 1877, in a letter to a Russian journal, **Marx**, referring to the French edition of *C I*, opposes a speculative identification of his 'historical sketch of the genesis of capitalism in Western Europe' (MECW 24/200 [MEW 19/111]) with Eastern European, Russian, or Asian history. 'The "historical inevitability" of this movement', he writes to Vera **Zasulich** in

1881, 'is thus *expressly* limited to the *countries of Western Europe*' (370 [242]). In the Marxism of the next 100 years, this view only takes hold among individual intellectuals.

Young-Bae **Song** thinks that **Marx** assumed the opposition of pre-capitalist and capitalist society as a polarity of barbarism and civilisation (1983, 88–94). For Marx, however, the capitalist-bourgeois society spreading from Europe is by no means the highest standard of civilisation. Only if it were possible to subject 'the results of the bourgeois epoch, the market of the world and the modern powers of production [...] to the common control of the most advanced peoples, then only will human progress cease to resemble that hideous, pagan idol, who would not drink the nectar but from the skulls of the slain' (MECW 12/222 [MEW 9/226]).

When **Marx** explores 'the economic law of motion of modern society' (*C I*, 92 [MEW 23/15]) by taking England as an example, from where capitalism spread, this can be understood as '"E" of the real process', which has nothing to do with approving its structure, forms of enforcement, and consequences (**Kössler** 1983, 9). **Marx**'s theory is also "proletariat-centred", since it announces 'the inevitable conquest of political power by the working class' (*C I*, 619 [MEW 23/512]). It regards the dynamics of capitalism as limitless. Already in the *Manifesto*, it is predicted that the bourgeoisie will 'through its exploitation of the world market give a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country' (6/488 [4/466]). But despite an ever tightening network of production, trade, information and communication 'that bound every part of the world economy to the global system' (**Hobsbawm** 1994, 87), there are still millions of peasants worldwide engaged in subsistence farming, plus the permanently unemployed in urban centres. Both are not included in the capitalist market economy, neither part of an 'industrial reserve army' nor a dual economy. Therefore, the generality of the "proletarian standpoint" is only valid from the spontaneously adopted standpoint of the more developed centres of world capitalism. Of course, the question is whether a formative civilisational alternative can be expected from the pre- or extra-capitalist spheres.

According to **Marx**, the process of plundering the colonies and enriching the metropolises was determined by the specific character of capitalist accumulation, which is 'at the same time accumulation of misery, the torment of labour, slavery, ignorance, brutalization and moral degradation at the opposite pole' (*C I*, 799). This social antagonism applies not only to the relations between the capitalist class and the wage-dependent in the metropolises, but equally characterises the relations between the capitalist countries and the economically backward countries. The basic social antagonism of capitalist accumulation thus described by Marx expresses the form of the realisation of the law of value

and surplus value. Under the pretence of "prices in conformity with the market" surplus product flows from the "South" to the "North". Accumulation in the centres corresponds to decumulation in the peripheral countries. The structure of "centre and periphery" is not primarily an ideological question, but a structure of the world market, and therefore not a Eurocentric ideology, although the European development phase of capitalism occupies a central position in it (cf. **Haug** 1987, 204, 215; **Khalatbari** 1984, 96 et sq.).

3. Eduard **Bernstein** justifies colonial exploitation and land seizure by saying that 'the higher civilisation' of the colonial masters has also 'a higher right' (*Preconditions*, 1899, 170). Similarly, Antonio **Labriola** (see **Gramsci**'s critique, *Notebook* 11, § 1). Georgi **Plekhanov** universalises the Western European scheme of development. Original exchange of products leads via simple commodity exchange necessarily 'to the disintegration of the primitive community. Within the clan there arise new interests, which ultimately engender a new political organisation; the class struggle begins with all its inevitable consequences in the sphere of mankind's political, moral and intellectual evolution' (1896, 174).

In **Plekhanov**'s "disciple", **Lenin**, elements of a Eurocentric development scheme of history are in conflict with its theoretical and practical critique. In his lecture *The State*, he calls for the examination of 'all social questions, economic, political, spiritual, religious, etc.' in connection with the 'transition of society from primitive forms of slavery to serfdom and finally to capitalism' (CW 29/477). In *ECont*, he discusses the economic peculiarities of Russia after the abolition of serfdom as a special case of the general capitalist development and overemphasises what he sees as the comprehensive 'invasion of agriculture by *capital*' (CW 1/465; cf. **Kan** 1994, 29). **Lenin**, however, opposes mere imitation of (Western) European history. In *Tactics*, he does compare the Bolsheviks with the Jacobins, but outlines 'new methods of action' for the future Russian revolution (CW 9/60). For him, the First World War and the misery of the postwar period are an expression of the fact that 'the old bourgeois and imperialist Europe, which was accustomed to look upon itself as the centre of the universe' is rotten (CW 33/349 et sq.). In his speeches and essays on the Comintern congresses he increasingly points to the importance of Asia and Africa. The large population, the backwardness, and the revolutionary potency now unite Russia with the 'colonial and weak nationalities' of the East (31/150), which he grasps as 'new classes' (232) and thus transfers the class struggle to global relations.

Trotsky, who had recognised early on the importance of the 1905 Russian Revolution for the East (Persia, China, Turkey), predicted in 1919 that the revolutionary road would lead from Moscow to Paris and London via the cities of Afghanistan, the Punjab, and Bengal (**Mandel** 1992, 28).

After the October Revolution, there is a consensus among the Bolshevik leaders that a "Europeanisation" of Soviet Russia, i.e. the building of a higher level of culture (cf. **Lenin** CW 36/549) is a basic prerequisite for the construction of socialism in Russia. **Stalin** reverses the relationship. Henceforth, the '*victory* of the October Revolution signifies a radical change in the history of mankind' and in the 'culture and ideology of the exploited masses throughout the world' (Wks 10, 245). Moscow is supposed to be the "centre of the world revolution", symbolised among other things by the monumental art of the 1930s. 'We are the only direct successors of Ancient Rome' is proclaimed at a conference of Soviet architects (quoted in **Bown** 1991). In *DHMat*, **Stalin** absolutises the Western European scheme of development, including Soviet state socialism and excluding the Asiatic mode of production, into a kind of ideal typology: 'Five *main* types of relations of production are known to history: primitive communal, slave, feudal, capitalist and Socialist' (123).

4. Enrique **Dussel** draws the "other face" of bourgeois-civilised "modernity": 'the peripheral colonial world, the sacrificed Indian, the enslaved Black, the oppressed woman, the subjugated child, and the alienated popular culture' (1995, 137). The emancipative reason of "modernity" can only overcome its limitations when 'Enlightenment rationality' is 'purified from the E or developmentalist fallacy ingredient in hegemonic processes of modernization' (ibid.): Modern civilisation considers itself as more developed and therefore sees itself obliged to develop the 'primitives, uneducated, the barbarous' (136).

In the Third World, the critique of E can serve as an ideology of exoneration. 'For, if [...] the local context does not matter, then Third World leaders are no longer responsible for the ills of their countries' (**Gran** 1996, 6). Criticism of a lack of tolerance and democratic control, of a lack of freedom of the press, of child labour, environmental destruction, and women's oppression is readily dismissed by the elites of these countries as E, as a Western "cultural invasion". Often, however, the critics ignore the question regarding the economic and social relationships, political motives, and the contribution of the West to the criticised situation (cf. **Auernheimer** 1992, 668), and often enough an abstract universalism of human rights has been instrumentalised for the purposes of Western capitalist hegemony.

If the "end of history" could be proclaimed after the downfall of state-bureaucratic socialism, this expressed the illusionary arrogance of the "West" to have achieved undisputed world hegemony with its pattern of civilisation. The cultural-ideological E seemed to be more unshakeable than ever in the media, in science, in politics, and in everyday life (**Boris** 1992, 170). At the same time, the ecological crisis, the flare-up of wars and civil wars, migration movements

and the spread of mass unemployment also fuelled doubts about the continued existence of this model, which aims for universal recognition and domination. Samir **Amin** calls on progressive forces on a global scale for 'the construction of a polycentric world' (1992, 81) that establishes a flexible connection among all regions and allows for the execution of specific policies.

It would be the cunning of unreason to derive from the critique of E a final paradoxical sense of missionary task for Europe. 'The imperial echo of European history', Heinz **Hülsmann** admonishes Europeans, 'does not permit a *felix culpa* [happy guilt] as Europe's self-interpretation, much less its recommendation in the guise of universalism (see Robert **Spaemann**). Rather, we have to perceive ourselves from the conditions and under the conditions of technological formation. Technology has long since left Europe, just as it has changed it. In this sense, we are no longer in Europe. We live in a simultaneity and in a placelessness that can only be experienced and grasped by us as intercontinental. Even our name does not simply come from our own mouth into our own ear, but rather we have to learn to pronounce our own name […] from the articulation that reaches us from the echo of the continents' (1990, 213).

Gunter Willing
Translated by Kolja Swingle

Bibliography

S. **Amin**, *Empire of Chaos*, transl. W.H. Locke Anderson, New York 1992.

G. **Auernheimer**, 'Universelle Rechtsansprüche und die Anerkennung kultureller Differenz – ein Antagonismus', *Argument* 195, vol. 34, 1992, no. 5, 665–74.

D. **Boris**, *Ursprünge der europäischen Welteroberung*, Heilbronn 1992.

M.C. **Bown**, *Art Under Stalin*, Oxford 1991.

M.J.A.N. **Condorcet**, *Outlines of an Historical View of the Progress of the Human Mind*, Baltimore 1802.

B. **Davidson**, 'Die Such nach der Vergangenheit', *Silsila: Zeitschrift gegen Rassismus und Imperialismus*, 1995, no. 5, 27.

P. **Dietsche**, *Das Erstaunen über das Fremde: 4 literaturwissenschaftliche Studien zum Problem des Verstehens und der Darstellung fremder Kulturen*, Frankfurt/M a.o. 1984.

E. **Dussel**, *The Invention of the Americas: Eclipse of 'the Other' and the Myth of Modernity*, transl. M.D. Barber, New York 1995.

M. **Godelier**, 'The Concept of "Asiatic Mode of Production" and Marxist Models of Social Evolution', ed. D. Seddon, *Relations of Production*, London 1978, 209–58.

P. **Gran**, *Beyond Eurocentrism: A New View of Modern World History*, New York 1996.

W.F. **Haug**, 'Krise oder Dialektik des Marxismus', *Pluraler Marxismus: Beiträge zur politischen Kultur*, vol. 1, Berlin/W 1985, 22–51.

W.F. **Haug**, 'Marxismus, Dritte Welt und das Problem des Eurozentrismus' (1979), *Pluraler Marxismus*, vol. 2, Berlin/W 1987, 197–215.

A. **Henn**, *Reisen in vergangene Gegenwart*, Berlin/W 1988.

E. **Hobsbawm**, *The Age of Extremes*, London 1994.

H. **Hülsmann**, *Nietzsche und Odysseus: Eurozentrismus und anthropozentrische Differenz*, Munich 1990.

E. **Jouhy**, *Bleiche Herrschaft – Dunkle Kulturen*, Frankfurt/M 1985.

A. **Kan**, 'Lenin als revolutionärer "Westler"', T. Bergmann et al. (eds.), *Lenin: Theorie und Praxis in historischer Perspektive*, Mainz 1994, 23–32.

I. **Kant**, 'Physical Geography', *Natural Science*, ed. E. Watkins, Cambridge 2012.

P. **Khalatbari**, *Ökonomische Unterentwicklung: Eine historisch-politökonomische Analyse*, Berlin/GDR 1984.

S.-Y. **Kim**, *Karl Marx und die nichteuropäischen Gesellschaften: Zur Kritik der eurozentrischen Interpretation der Marxschen Auffassung über die nichteuropäischen Gesellschaften*, Frankfurt/M a.o. 1993.

R. **Kössler**, 'Asiatische Volksbewegung, russische Populisten und "Das Kapital" – Über Marxsche Zugänge zu nichtkapitalistischen Gesellschaften', *Peripherie: Zeitschrift für Politik und Ökonomie der Dritten Welt*, vol. 14, 1983, no. 14, 4–23.

J. **Kristeva**, *Strangers to Ourselves*, transl. L.S. Roudiez, New York 1991.

H. **Krumpel**, *Philosophie in Lateinamerika: Grundzüge ihrer Entwicklung*, Berlin 1992.

E. **Laclau**, 'Diskurs, Hegemonie und Politik: Betrachtungen über die Krise des Marxismus', *Neue Soziale Bewegungen und Marxismus*, AS 78, Berlin/W 1982, 6–22.

C. **Malandrino**, 'Eurozentrismus', EE 1, 950 et sq.

R.A. **Mall**, *Philosophie im Vergleich der Kulturen: Interkulturelle Philosophie – eine neue Orientierung*, Darmstadt 1995.

E. **Mandel**, *Trotzki als Alternative*, Berlin 1992.

H. **Melber**, 'Die Bürde des weißen Mannes – Von der Last mit uns selbst', *Peripherie*, vol. 11, 1991, no. 43/44, 8–20.

H. **Melber**, G. **Hauck**, 'Kolonialer Blick und Rationalität der Aufklärung', *Peripherie*, vol. 9, 1989, no. 37, 6–20.

G. **Plekhanov**, *Selected Philosophical Works*, vol. II, transl. from the Russian by J. Katzer, Moscow 1976.

E.W. **Said**, *Orientalism*, New York 1978.

E.W. **Said**, *Culture and Imperialism*, New York 1993.

Y.-B. **Song**, *Konfuzianismus: Konfuzianische Gesellschaft und die Sinisierung des Marxismus*, Frankfurt/M 1983.

R. **Spaemann**, 'Universalismus und Eurozentrismus', *Merkur* 474, vol. 42, 1988, 706–12.

I. **Wallerstein**, *Geopolitics and Geoculture: Essays on the World-System*, Paris-Cambridge 1991.

B. **Warren**, *Imperialism: Pioneer of Capitalism*, London 1980.

→ African mode of production, anthropology, Asiatic mode of production, Central Europe, chauvinism, colonialism, cultural imperialism, developing countries, dual economy, end of history, ethnic group/ethnicity, ethnocentrism, ethnology, Europe, globalisation, imperialism, industrial reserve army, industrialisation, multiculturalism, orientalism, Owl of Minerva, peoples without history, peripheral capitalism, polycentrism, primitive accumulation, proletariat, racism, strange/alien/strangeness, violence, working class, world market, world system

→ afrikanische Produktionsweise, Anthropolgie, Arbeiterklasse, asiatische Produktionsweise, Chauvinismus, Dualwirtschaft, Ende der Geschichte, Entwicklungsländer, Ethnie, Ethnologie, Ethnozentrismus, Eule der Minerva, Europa, fremd/Fremdheit, geschichtslose Völker, Gewalt, Globalisierung, Imperialismus, Industrialismus, industrielle Reservearmee, Kolonialismus, Kulturimperialismus, Mitteleuropa, Multikulturalismus, Orientalismus, peripherer Kapitalismus, Polyzentrismus, Proletariat, Rassismus, ursprüngliche Akkumulation, Weltmarkt, Weltsystem

CHAPTER 14

Everyday

A: al-yaumi. – F: le quotidien. – G: Alltag. – R: budni, povsednevnost'. – S: lo cotidiano. – C: rìcháng shēnghuó 日常生活

According to the **Grimm** *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (1854), the German noun form of E is 'uncommon', and as with Johann Christoph **Adelung**'s *Grammatisch-kritisches Wörterbuch* (1793), aside from 'everydayness' – e.g. 'bourgeois everydayness' – it only lists compound words such as 'E clothes', 'E meals', or the pejorative sense of 'E understanding', otherwise known as 'common sense'. Only **Heinsius**'s *Volksthümliches Wörterbuch*, a vernacular dictionary from 1818, lists 'E' as a noun, though more specifically as a synonym for 'working day'. It seems no coincidence that the abstract singular, and the experience of time expressed therein, only entered into common use in the context of 19th cent. capitalism's separation of the spheres of production and E life, work and leisure. If social reality cannot be grasped by the E understanding, then instead 'one grasps the E from reality' (**Kosík** 1967/76, 45).

1. That which is done every day, the sphere of immediate life, and the aspects which are unquestioned or taken for granted therein, all hardly seem worthy of mention. The everydayness of the E begs the question of what in particular makes it a subject of interest.

1.1 '[E]ating and drinking, housing, clothing and various other things' – at the beginning of his path, **Marx** had the realisation that 'the production of material life itself' is 'a fundamental condition of all history, which today, as thousands of years ago, must daily and hourly be fulfilled merely in order to sustain human life' (*GI*, MECW 5/41 et sq. [MEW 3/28]). He is consistently interested in the specific circumstances pertaining to the lower classes – beginning with the question of who owns the wood on the forest floor (MECW 1/224 et sq. [MEW 1/109 et sq.]), to the working and living conditions of the working classes (the economic critiques offer rich material). By no means does Marx reduce production purely to the production of basic necessities like food. Procreation and with it 'the relation between man and woman, parents and children, the *family*' is also considered production (*GI*, MECW 5/42 et sq. [MEW 3/29]).

Only apologetically ideological theories take their categories from E life 'without further criticism' (*C I*, 677 et sq. [MEW 23/559]). This brings a second

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_015
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

aspect into focus: the necessity of uncovering the functional relationships which lie hidden behind E modes of speech (see also the exemplary critique of the category 'price of labour' and how it obscures the fact that wages constitute 'the value of labour-power' – 678 [559 et sqq.]). A critical relationship to the E gives **Marx** the criteria to differentiate between a classical political economy which strives for relational knowledge and a vulgar economy which has its 'base of operations' (679 [561]) in the 'E prejudices' (*C III*, 522 [MEW 25/411]). Marx encounters this vulgar economy especially in regard to the 'base of operations' of the 'E phenomena of competition' (127 [47]), describing it as 'nothing more than a didactic and more or less doctrinaire translation of the E notions of the actual agents of production' (969 [838 et sq.]). For it is with these 'configurations of appearance' – the 'estranged and irrational forms of capital-interest, land-rent, labour-wages' – that the agents of production 'are daily involved' in, and in which they 'feel completely at home' (969 [838]). Marx refers to the ensemble of these 'irrational forms' and the natural "settling into" them as being the 'religion of E life' (ibid.), a critique which combines themes from the critiques of religion and ideology with the critique of the fetishism of capitalist value-forms.

1.2 One encounters the tendency to look for the reality *behind* E phenomena more in the works of **Engels** than in **Marx**, and this tendency paves the way for the economic determinism of the Second International. Where others (implicitly) attempt to redefine conditions as neutral, **Engels** explicitly denounces their exploitative nature (see his criticism of the talk of a 'so-called housing shortage' – MECW 23/317 [MEW 18/213]). The 'point of view of the whole' (3/205 [1/408]) is reduced to identifying what is purported to be fundamental and real, and relegates the immediate forms in which individuals experience lived conditions to merely derived appearances.

2. The grand vision of the abolition of the rule of capital runs the risk of being relinquished to the step-by-step approach of reformism. Antonio **Gramsci** would see this as the kind of 'self-criticism' which is itself 'proof of one's inferiority' (*PN* 3, N. 8, § 158, 324 et sq.). The image of the E as presented by the labour movement's theory of history is diverse, and to some extent contradictory.

2.1 In **Lenin**'s 1902 text *What Is to Be Done?* in which his turn against economism is completed, one encounters a heightened sense of the E. As soon as it comes down to the mobilisation of political agency, 'the narrow confines of factory life' (CW 5/414) must be abandoned. The social-democratic worker must

be able to analyse '*all* classes, strata and groups of the population' and 'grasp the meaning of all the catchwords and sophisms' (412 et sq.). Hence the importance of 'exposures that follow close upon […] what is being discussed, in whispers perhaps, by each one in his own way' (413). After the October Revolution, the path that in 1902 had led from economics to politics had, to some degree, to be traced back to economics. In a country ravaged by war and hunger, E life had to be posed as an economic problem first and foremost: one had to 'defeat the enemies of the people […] *not only* in politics, but also in *E economic* life' (*How to Organise Competition?*, CW 26/404). Now that it would come down to each and every individual, a new problem takes on significance: the 'rotten routine, […] petrified views, slavish habits' (409) became the major obstacles. Six years later and nothing had changed in that regard. The civil war had been won, but the revolution had barely appeared in the E, and from this disparity the necessity of the cultural revolution arose: only that which 'has become part and parcel of our culture, of our social life, our habits' can be regarded as achieved (*Better Fewer, But Better*, CW 33/487). In a country where pencils were scarce and the Earth was still frequently believed to be a disc, the E essentially seems to be a breeding ground for the forces of habit that stand in the way of "catch-up" development. This view is symptomatic of a counter-hegemonic situation in which the Bolsheviks were fighting, to no avail, against prevailing circumstances. Although Lenin's cultural critique could also lay claim to it, **Stalin** was the first to bundle these efforts together into an industrialisation policy that was enforced with violence.

2.2 'Man does not live by politics alone' – this variation on the words of Jesus forms a chapter title for **Trotsky**'s *Problems of Everyday Life* (1923). His view is that the 'non-political' worker, being a good worker, cannot be won over through politics, but only through 'production and technique' (21). Trotsky argues for the necessity of shifting attention to 'the struggle for culture', without weakening 'the *political role* of the party' (19). He believes he has found in cinema the means to upend old habits, above all those relating to church and the consumption of alcohol. The cultural revolution is reduced to a mere substitution: it is now just a matter of making up for 'the separation of the church from the socialist state' by fusing 'the socialist state and the cinema' (33). Trotsky's technicist approach to the problem of hegemony shares common ground with **Stalin**'s vision of social engineering.

2.3 Agnes **Heller**, who studied under Georg **Lukács**, conceives of the E as where the 'reproduction of the individual' (1970/1984, 4, transl. corr.) takes place. She sees the young **Marx** as an advocate for individuality and personality, the devel-

opment of which she regards to be just as much a pre-condition for communism as the 'pushing back of natural barriers' (19). The 'pseudoconcrete of the alienated E world' (**Kosík** 1967, 48) must be destroyed in order to re-attain the prospect of changing the world, and not only – as in existentialism – the 'attitude toward it' (49).

2.4 After the Second World War, in the face of staggering growth in the capitalist culture and entertainment industries, the E began to attract attention in a way it had not done previously. 'The Culture Industry', a chapter in Max **Horkheimer** and Theodor W. **Adorno**'s *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1944/47), is a foundational text for critical theory post-1945. The text correlates strongly with Marxist critique of Stalinism, and all subsequent work on mass culture owes inspiration to it. In contrast, the form of state socialism which developed in the Soviet Union would only accept a triumphant depiction of E production. The humanist critics of the canonised ML, on the other hand, primarily drew on the **Marx** of the *Paris Manuscripts* (1844) and **Lukács**'s *History and Class Consciousness* (1923). These two works seem predestined to serve as reminders of the alienation of the capitalist and socialist E which dispute the triumphalism surrounding these matters in official discourse. For Henri **Lefebvre**, expelled from the PCF in 1958, 'the theory of alienation and of the "total man" remain the driving force behind the critique of E life' (1947/1991, 76).

The more that integration into the prevailing relations seemed to proceed without question, the more the difference 'between the universe of E thinking and language [...] and that of philosophic thinking and language' seemed to be 'irreducible' (**Marcuse** 1964/1991, 183). Due to the fact that social antagonisms tend to be neutralised in the 'order of business', the E becomes the refuge of a 'new totalitarianism' (64). For Marcuse, critiquing the prevailing conditions is logically only possible from a point of view which lies 'beyond common sense' (186). The independent activity of individuals and their active engagement with the conditions – where **Gramsci**, despite all equivocation, also sees possible starting points from which those conditions could be altered – recede into the background against critical theory's totalising lens.

3. The alienation paradigm has proved to be an inadequate means of identifying the precise ways in which people are integrated into the ruling order. That an individual, of their own accord, wants what is socially desirable every day, is itself the subject of endless machinations by the ideological powers-that-be. The E would therefore appear to be a 'place of do-it-yourself ideology' (W.F. **Haug** 1986).

The concept of the E encompasses highly heterogenous elements and for this reason must be analytically divided into distinct dimensions. Various approaches in cultural and ideological theory have directed their attention to how voluntary subordination to higher authority and the capacity to act to obtain the E necessities of individual reproduction are interlinked in a contradictory fashion (see the studies of the CCCS in Birmingham, especially **Willis** 1977, and Berlin's *Projekt Ideologietheorie* [PIT]). The pressures of competitive relations, in which the sociality of individuals presents itself as a set of 'external' demands and impositions, unleash a variety of different 'normalisation practices' (**Castel** 1979, 304) in which each individual forges their own destiny. The daily practices, repeated millionfold, generate a special readiness to receive the messages of institutionally-produced ideologies, and their particular effectiveness can only be explained as being a result of this repetition. The fundamental moral question of philosophy – how should we live? – is the 'echo of an anonymous question voiced by many [...] that emanates up from bourgeois society' (W.F. **Haug** 1986, 109).

History of the E. – Historical research into popular culture, provided that it does not become too enamoured of folkloric detail and eschew social-analytical rigour, can help focus our attention upon the finer details of the processes that go into building cultural hegemony. This research has shown that through the complementary relationship of the E and the festival, and between the system of rule and its symbolic-expressive reversal in carnival, forces of social cohesion are unleashed, which the authorities have attempted to use for their own purposes – not always successfully. The French historians associated with the journal *Annales* focused on forces that shape history, such as 'material civilisation', the *longue durée*, and 'mentalities', which, outside of major political ruptures, determine the general historical climate. Fernand **Braudel**'s work on the development of capitalism from the 15th–18th cent.s develops a tripartite schema of E subsistence production (the actual economic foundation that made up the concrete reality for 90% of the population), commodity production for the market, and transnational merchant capitalism (1975/1981, 25–28). The account logically begins with 'the structures of E life'. In this case, E refers to the 'shadowy zone' of an 'infra-economy' for the production of 'material life' (23 et sq.). – E.P. **Thompson** explored how workers played an active role in their being formed into a 'class'. From this perspective, 'class' proves to be a 'relationship' (1963, 9) that must constantly be renewed, but the E is no longer solely the realm of dull repetition, instead serving simultaneously as a formative area of the 'moral economy' of the people – the tapestry of customs, norms, rights, and ideas of legitimacy and justice that is intricately interwoven with the reproduction of relations

of production. Thompson amends the phrase '[w]ithout production no history' to '[w]ithout culture, no production' (1978/1979, 20). – Jürgen **Kuczynski**, who related his history of the E (see vol. 1, 15) to **Braudel**'s undertaking, criticised the one-sided fixation of traditional labour historiography on the 'great battles' of the proletariat as being an inadvertent reflection of the actual state of affairs: 'generally it is the leadership that moves, and on days of celebration or mourning, it is the mass of workers that move, and that's the end of that'.

Women's movement. – Of all the new social movements that came into being after 1968, none understood the E as their "battlefield" to the extent that the new women's movement did. Sexism in E speech was vigorously interrogated and challenged. A comprehensive transformation of the E was undertaken accordingly: dedicated flat-shares for women, women's travel, and the emergence of a veritable cultural infrastructure including publishing houses, and book and magazine production, that warrants talk of a literary movement. The personal – which was declared political – was revealed to be a fundamental mode for regulating bourgeois society: the separation of the public and private spheres, mediated through the 'sexualisation of the body' (see F. **Haug** 1983), based on the assignment of the respective sexes to either paid employment or housework, the state or the kitchen.

Peter Jehle
Translated by Rowan Coupland

Bibliography

Th.W. **Adorno**, M. **Horkheimer**, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1947), transl. J. Cumming, London-New York 1997.

G. **Anders**, *Die Antiquiertheit des Menschen*, vol. 1, Munich 1956.

F. **Braudel**, *Civilization and Capitalism, vol. 1: The Structures of Everyday Life* – rev. edn. (1979), transl. S. Reynolds, London-New York 1981.

R. **Castel**, *Die psychiatrische Ordnung*, Frankfurt/M 1979 (Eng. *The Regulation of Madness: The Origins of Incarceration in France*, transl. W.D. Halls, Berkeley 1988).

R.v. **Dülmen**, N. **Schindler** (eds.), *Volkskultur: Zur Wiederentdeckung des vergessenen Alltags* (*16.–20. Jahrhundert*), Frankfurt/M 1984.

N. **Elias**, 'Zum Begriff des Alltags', *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, vol. 20 (special edition), Materialien zur Soziologie des Alltags, 1978, 22–29.

S. **Freud**, *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1901), SE VI.

F. **Haug** (ed.), *Frauenformen*, 2 vols., AS 45 and AS 90, Berlin 1980 and 1983.

W.F. **Haug**, *Warenästhetik und kapitalistische Massenkultur (1): 'Werbung' und 'Konsum' – Systematische Einführung in die Warenästhetik*, Berlin/W 1980.

W.F. **Haug**, *Die Faschisierung des bürgerlichen Subjekts: Die Ideologie der gesunden Normalität und die Ausrottungspolitiken im deutschen Faschismus*, AS 80, Berlin/W 1986.

A. **Heller**, *Everyday Life* (1970), transl. G.L. Campbell, London 1984.

K. **Kosík**, *Dialectics of the Concrete* (1963), transl. K. Kovanda and J. Schmidt, Dordrecht 1976.

J. **Kuczynski**, *Geschichte des Alltags des deutschen Volkes*, 5 vols., Cologne 1980 et sqq.

J. **Kuczynski**, *Ein Gespräch mit Jürgen Kuczynski über die Arbeiterklasse, Alltag, Geschichte, Kultur*, Marburg 1984.

H. **Lefebvre**, *Critique of Everyday Life, Vol. 1: Introduction (1947)*, transl. J. Moore, London-New York 1991.

A. **Lüdtke** (ed.), *The History of Everyday Life: Reconstructing Historical Experiences and Ways of Life* (1989), transl. W. Templer, Princeton 1995.

H. **Marcuse**, *One-Dimensional Man* (1964), London-New York 1991.

Projekt Ideologie-Theorie, *Theorien über Ideologie*, AS 40, Berlin/W 1979.

E.P. **Thompson**, *Folklore, Anthropology and Social History* (1978), Brighton 1979.

E.P. **Thompson**, *The Making of the English Working Class*, London 1963.

L. **Trotsky**, *Problems of Everyday Life* (1923), New York 1973.

P.E. **Willis**, *Learning to Labour: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs*, Farnborough 1977.

→ alienation, antagonism, apathy, apologia, appearance, commodity aesthetics, common sense, critical theory, critique, critique of religion, cultural revolution, cultural work, culture, delusion [context of], derivation/deduction/backtracing, division of labour, everydayness, experience, fetishism, habit, humanism, ideology critique, mode of life, non-simultaneity, phrase, popular culture, researching of everyday life, subalternity, unpolitical/apolitical, vulgar economy, women's movement, working-class cultural movement, working-class culture

→ Ableitung, Alltagsforschung, Alltagsverstand, Alltäglichkeit, Antagonismus, Apathie, Apologie, Arbeiterkultur, Arbeiterkulturbewegung, Arbeitsteilung, Entfremdung, Erfahrung, Fetischismus, Frauenbewegung, Gewohnheit, Humanismus, Ideologiekritik, Lebensweise, Kritik, Kritische Theorie, Kultur, Kulturarbeit, Kulturrevolution, Phrase, Religionskritik, Schein, Subalternität, Ungleichzeitigkeit, unpolitisch, Verblendungszusammenhang, Volkskultur, Vulgärökonomie, Warenästhetik

CHAPTER 15

Family Work, Domestic Labour, Housework

A: ʿamal ʾusrawī, ʿamal baitī. – F: travail familial, travail domestique. – G: Familienarbeit, Hausarbeit. – R: semejnaja rabota, domašnjaja rabota. – S: trabajo familiar, trabajo doméstico. – C: jiātíng láodòng, jiāwù láodòng 家庭劳动, 家务劳动

The feminist confrontation with **Marx** that began with Mariarosa **Dalla Costa**'s intervention (1972) and continued as the *DL debate* involves a set of problems which requires a philologically precise reading of **Marx** and **Engels**. However, the points of criticism raised in this debate inaccurately refer to the words of **Marx** and **Engels**, both in terms of "labour" and "DL". Therefore, they do not put forward a sound critique of reproduction relations and their conceptual understanding.

Marx and **Engels** not only write about labour as wage labour, as assumed in the feminist debate, but also use a whole series of concepts to capture those activities carried out in the home for personal consumption or for the market, on one's own initiative or for capital. For example, they usually refer to H as gainful employment carried out in the home and treat what in the 20th cent. has been understood as H under the term FW. These problems centre on the question of how the gendered division of labour into reproductive and productive labour found its way into the *CPE*, and therefore how the activities understood as FW or H are located in total social labour and the reproduction of society as a whole. The treatment/non-treatment of these issues dominated feminist discussion on the concept of labour from the 1970s to the end of the cent.

1. In his preface to *Origin*, **Engels** sketches what he means by the 'production and reproduction of immediate life' (MECW 26/131 [MEW 21/27]): 'On the one hand, the production of the means of subsistence, of food, clothing and shelter and the implements required for this; on the other, the production of human beings themselves, the propagation of the species' (131 et sq. [27 et sq.]). Both are labelled 'production', and thus providing a starting point for a theory of women's oppression. However, he himself obstructs the elaboration of such a theory by further determining these two types of production as 'labour, on the one hand, and [...] family, on the other' (132 [28]). As a result of this division, he is only able to theorise the family, and thus women's oppression, in terms of the

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_016
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

organisation of biological processes and their legalisation and incorporation into the state. FW could not be taken into account. Consequently, Engels examines the organisation of procreation, but not how the labour carried out in the family stands in relation to the totality of labour and the reproduction of society. And yet, at another point, he is quite clear that work is done in the family: 'The whole development of human society beyond the stage of brute savagery begins on the day when the labour of the family created more products than were necessary for its maintenance, on the day when a portion of labour could be devoted to the production no longer of the mere means of subsistence, but of the means of production' (MECW 25/180 [MEW 20/180]). Engels does not concern himself further with the significance of this process for what he calls the 'creation of mere means of subsistence', but rather looks solely at the surplus product as the basis of all 'social, political, and intellectual progress' (ibid.).

Marx, on the other hand, is interested in the question of which segments of the population enter into wage labour – insofar as these are women, he occasionally uses the term 'women's work' (see, for example, MECW 35/403 [MEW 23/421]) – and, vice versa, of how capital penetrates into different parts of society. When H is performed for money, he considers it from the standpoint of simple circulation, in which money is exchanged as revenue for services – that is, 'an act which consumes wealth' (MECW 28/394 [MEGA II.1.2/374]). Concerning the former sphere, he writes: 'In bourgeois society itself all kinds of exchange of personal services for revenue belong in this category – including labour for personal consumption, cooking, sewing, etc., gardening, etc.' (396 [375]). In *C I*, Marx looks at the publishing house-like capitalist organisation of labour that takes place in small, family-run household workshops, and in this context calls it FW. He emphasises that this organisation of labour tends to transform time for all family members, including children, into working hours. In connection with the enforcement of factory legislation, Marx writes about the 'regulation of so-called housework […] as a direct attack on the *patria potestas*, on parental authority. The tender-hearted English Parliament long affected to shrink from taking this step. The force of facts, however, compelled it at last to acknowledge that modern industry, in overturning the economic foundation on which was based the traditional family, and the family labour corresponding to it, had also unloosened all traditional family ties' (MECW 35/491 et sq. [MEW 23/513]). Here, Marx raises the question of the 'rights of children'; his subject is the disintegration of the family through capitalist commodity production and thus the collision of two different modes of production and life: market logic, which presupposes the free commodity owner, and FW, with its relative lack of rights for women and children. Elsewhere, he writes: 'Previously, the worker sold his own labour power, which he disposed

over as a formally free person. Now he sells wife and child. He has become a slave-dealer' (399 [418]). In the footnote, he refers to 'traits of the operative parents in relation to the traffic in children, that are truly revolting and thoroughly like slave-dealing' (ibid., fn. 2 [fn. 122]). Marx quotes a large number of factory reports, especially on child labour, all of which show how 'the spheres of handicraft and of H become, in a relatively short time, dens of misery' (493 [514]), and then arrives at a broader perspective: 'However terrible and disgusting the dissolution, under the capitalist system, of the old family ties may appear, nevertheless, modern industry, by assigning as it does an important part in the process of production, outside the domestic sphere, to women, to young persons, and to children of both sexes, creates a new economic foundation for a higher form of the family and of the relations between the sexes' (492 [ibid.]). Marx sees in the process of upheaval the developmental tendencies that advance the new society while destroying the old one, thus appearing ambiguous, like a shackle that also offered protection. The 'domestic sphere' is a domain that, as an outdated form, must be left behind for the sake of the development of persons and society. Here, Marx does not consider other forms of labour in the family apart from the production of commodities. He thus does not show how the care work of human beings and nature, i.e., that which is called reproductive labour at the end of the 20th cent., enters into the socialisation process.

In *Capital*, **Marx** conceives under H what will, for the most part, later be called domestic work, the 'home industries' (see MECW 35/303, 348 et sq., 387, 468–72, 511, 598, 662, 696, 736 [MEW 23/316, 363 et sq., 405, 489–93, 533, 629, 699, 733, 776]); in this context, he also speaks in part of the 'domestic industry', meaning an 'outside department of the factory, the manufactory, or the warehouse' (464; see 511 [485; cf. 533]). Once again, it is the analysis of form that is paramount or, more precisely, how an 'intermediate form' emerges in connection with H – for example, when the usurer's capital, which feeds on independent producers, blocks the expansion of the capitalist mode of production – whereas in the case of H, the intermediate form turns out to be beneficial (or reproduced belatedly) against the backdrop of large industry (511 [533]). H is not directly subordinated to capital, but rather it is the 'usurers' or 'merchants' who guarantee pressure on domestic producers.

Marx comments on the conflict between FW and gainful employment outside the home in two footnotes. He refers to a government report on the cotton crisis following the American Civil War: 'From a hygienic point of view, and apart from the banishment of the operatives from the factory atmosphere, the crisis had several advantages. The women now had sufficient leisure to give their infants the breast, instead of poisoning them with "Godfrey's cor-

dial" (an opiate). They had time to learn to cook. Unfortunately, the acquisition of this art of cooking occurred at a time when they had nothing to eat. But from this we see how capital, for its own self-expansion, has usurped the FW necessary for consumption' (MECW 35/398, fn. 1 [MEW 23/416 et sq., fn. 120]). This concept of *FW necessary for consumption* makes it possible to grasp different kinds of FW over and above labour in the forms of employment. However, in this arrangement too, Marx does not further elaborate upon the observation, found in the same quote, that 'leisure' was lacking to nurse the infant, resulting in the child being so malignantly 'nourished'. What is not pursued is the question of what happens to those qualities of life that do not succumb to the logic of profit and wages or else are destroyed once their bearers disappear from the 'domestic sphere'. On the other hand, Marx treats this question very briefly referring back to the example of breastfeeding, yet again as a question of wages: 'Since certain family functions, such as nursing and suckling children, cannot be entirely suppressed, the mothers confiscated by capital must try substitutes of some sort. Domestic work, such as sewing and mending, must be replaced by the purchase of ready-made articles. Hence, the diminished expenditure of labour in the house is accompanied by an increased expenditure of money' (MECW 35/399, fn. 1 [MEW 23/417, fn. 121]). Marx thereby emphasises that the inclusion of women in the capitalist production process does not mean extra income for families, and so from their point of view does not really pay off. Indeed, further analyses can at least follow on from this.

Marx's comparative analysis of production based on the division of labour provides additional approaches to a theory of FW. For example, he points to the 'rural patriarchal industries of a peasant family, that produces corn, cattle, yarn, linen, and clothing for home use. These different articles are, as regards the family, so many products of its family labour [...]. The different kinds of labour [...] are in themselves, and such as they are, direct social functions, because functions of the family, which, just as much as a society based on the production of commodities, possesses a spontaneously developed system of division of labour. [...] The labour power of each individual, by its very nature, operates in this case merely as organs of the joint labour power of the family, and therefore, the measure of the expenditure of individual labour power by its duration, appears here by its very nature as a social character of their labour' (MECW 35/89 [MEW 23/92]). It is astonishing that Marx did not follow up on this discovery and its consequences for the gender-specific division of labour and the capitalist model of civilisation. After all, the calculation of expended time also turns value into a curse, since only that which devours as little living time as possible can ultimately succeed in society. This is the model of pro-

gress. At the same time, this also gives us an indication of the longing that still applies to the family today and gives it endurance as a site where production does not only have to be calculated in a cost-effective and labour-saving way, but where one takes one's time and spends it mainly according to the needs of life – such as 'breastfeeding', telling stories, preparing elaborate meals, tending the aesthetics of the garden, and so on. In discussions at the end of the 20th cent., these activities are debated and fought over, referring to the term 'individual work [*Eigenarbeit*]'.

For **Marx**, the idea of the 'realm of freedom' as a sphere of activities whose ends are in themselves (see MECW 37/807 [MEW 25/828]) absorbs the interest in the problems that arise even when activities that are not carried out in the wage-form are socially determined according to the logic of cost-benefit calculations. In order to maximise the sphere of individual work, a category in which he probably includes FW, Marx relies on a comprehensive economisation of all *social* labour: 'The more the productiveness of labour increases, the more can the working day be shortened; and the more the working day is shortened, the more can the intensity of labour increase. From a social point of view, the productiveness increases in the same ratio as the economy of labour, which, in its turn, includes not only economy of the means of production, but also the avoidance of all useless labour' (MECW 35/530 [MEW 23/552]).

In **Marx**'s detailed analyses of labour under capitalism, the gender-specific division of labour appears only marginally. He describes its coming to be as initially "natural", a division on a 'purely physiological foundation', which through exchange turns into interdependent branches (MECW 35/356 [MEW 23/372]). He does not follow through on the structure of these domains, which remain fundamental to the capitalist model of civilisation. Occasionally, there are remarks on the key character of the 'feminine ferment' for social upheavals: 'Social progress may be measured precisely by the social position of the fair sex (plain ones included)' (MECW 43/185 [MEW 32/582, 583]). However, Marx does not pursue any further the ideas outlined in the *GI* on the dominate character of the gender-specific division of labour ('This latent slavery in the family, though still very crude, is the first form of property [...] the power of disposing of the labour-power of others'; MECW 5/46 [MEW 3/32]). This is all the more strange, since on this basis there developed a social formation in which society essentially produces that which can bring profit, and in which as a result all work that does not follow the profit logic and its time-regime (because it cannot be rationalised, automated, accelerated) is abandoned or left to the unpaid care of mostly women; this inscribes women's oppression into the foundations of the capitalist mode of production, and, at the same time, locates the work done in this form as unimportant, or, at best, as a similarly marketable resource. In this

sense, instead of focusing on the nexus of all socially necessary kinds of labour (and their superordination and subordination), the one-sided analysis of wage labour leads to an inadequate analysis of the reproduction of capitalist societies, and, thus, of their longevity and the forces that support them. Here, one must rework and rebuild the theory.

2. In classical Marxism, there were hardly any further analyses of the relation between FW and wage labour, especially with regard to the reproduction of society as a whole. Only beginning in the 1970s and 1980s was the question taken up once more in research and discussions.

2.1 Rosa **Luxemburg** astutely analysed the ramifications for various classes of excluding women from social production: 'But since the establishment of private property, the woman of the people has, for the most part, worked separately from the great workshop of social production, and therefore also of culture, cooped up in the domestic constriction of a miserable familial existence. Capitalism was the first to rip her out of the family and put her under the yoke of social production, forced into others' fields, into workshops, into buildings, into offices, factories, and warehouses. As a bourgeois woman, the female is a parasite on society; her function consists in sharing in the consumption of the fruits of exploitation. As a petty-bourgeois woman, she is a workhorse for the family. As a modern female proletarian, the woman becomes a human being for the first time, since the struggle is the first to prepare human beings to make a contribution to culture, to the history of humanity' (1914, RLR, 243 [*Die Proletarierin*, 1914, GW 3, 410 et sq.]). Like **Marx**, she points out that capital cruelly drives development towards that phase in which women are incorporated into 'social production' and thus into the class struggle as a condition of their emancipation; but she does not analyse the fate of H/FW any further, neither its subordination and destructiveness, nor the resulting humanitarian crises in the overall process of capitalist societies.

For **Lenin**, the family is a place of 'domestic slavery' and 'stupefying and humiliating subjugation to the eternal drudgery of the kitchen and the nursery'; 'the chief thing is to get women to take part in socially productive labour, to liberate them' (CW 30/409 [Werke, 30/401]). Elsewhere, he pleads for the improvement of H through technology: 'The electric lighting and heating of every home will relieve millions of "domestic slaves" of the need to spend three-fourths of their lives in smelly kitchens' (CW 19/62 [Werke, 19/43]). He also uses the phrase domestic worker for the irregularly employed when investigating '*stagnant overpopulation*' as part of the industrial reserve army (CW 2/180 [Werke, 2/175]).

2.2 Claude **Meillassoux** considers the neglect of the domain of reproduction in historical materialism to be a consequence of capitalist development, which, at least initially, did not have to worry about the question of whether and how labour power reproduces itself. 'The domestic community is indeed the only economic and social system which manages the physical reproduction of human beings, the reproduction of the producers and social reproduction at large through a comprehensive set of institutions, by the ordered manipulation of the living means of reproduction, that is: women. [...] In the last analysis, we find that all modern modes of production, all classes of societies depend, for the supply of labour-power, on the domestic community. As for capitalism, it depends both on the domestic communities of the colonised countries and on its modern transformation, the family, which still maintains its reproductive functions although deprived of its productive ones' (1975/1981, xii et sq.). Meillassoux describes 'domestic relations' as the 'organic basis' of feudalism, capitalism, and 'bureaucratic socialism'; his reflections lead him to criticise **Marx**'s method: because the capitalist mode of production is considered productively superior and yet reproductively inferior to the household economy it exploits, it cannot be assumed that 'the key to inferior forms is found in more advanced ones' (**Meillassoux** 1975/1981, xiii). – This refers to **Marx**'s *Intro 57*, where he notes: 'Bourgeois economy thus provides a key to that of antiquity, etc.' (MECW 28/42 [MEW 42/39]). Of course, this is not to be understood as evolutionistic or even mono-linear, as **Meillassoux** apparently assumes, but rather as a path of comprehension as soon as the more developed social formation has begun to become self-critical. Meillassoux continues: 'Our knowledge of capitalism, when it remains linked to other relations of production vividly maintained as necessary elements of its development, is not enough to enlighten us on the mysteries of the domestic economy' (1975/1981, xiii). Basically, as **Luxemburg** had already done (*Accu*, CW 2), he calls for forms of work and life that are not directly subject to the wage form to be viewed as a necessary basis of the capitalist economy: 'But there is no theory dealing with the way in which value can be extracted continuously through preserving the relations of the dominated mode of production' (1975/1981, 96).

Meillassoux examines the domestic community as a mode of production; he takes its interaction with the capitalist economy to be doubly contradictory. The domestic sector is at the same time the source of unpaid labour power (of women) and of paid labour power (of free labourers). If both functions are inadequately resolved (for example, with a sinking birth rate), the solution shifts imperialistically outward, by splitting the international proletariat: one part is allowed and gets trained to skilfully lay the foundation for capitalist development, while another must perform unskilled labour for low wages and,

in turn, ensure its own unpaid reproduction. 'Because of the inherent contradiction of this kind of over-exploitation [...] these peoples undergo social, political and often physical decline, which is linked to the decline of the domestic mode of production, back into which they are nevertheless ceaselessly being thrust' (1981, 139). According to Meillassoux, these processes are regulated by neocolonial wars, the establishment of repressive and dictatorial governments, and the domestication of peoples through torture and murder. He understands fascist labour camps as a model of capitalist exploitation driven to its peak after the liquidation of domestic communities (140), a thesis which, of course, completely subordinates the political standpoint to the economic. He combines the phrase 'socialism or barbarism' with a view on the mode of production based on the double exploitation of the 'domestic community'. He traces the contradiction of the family as a site of production for free wage labourers: the marriage contract overlooks the work done in the household, 'which in legal terms has no existence. [...] The work which the wife puts into producing the child – a future producer – is never paid for in wage terms, that is, in terms of the time effectively spent on production' (142). In this respect, the reproduction of the commodity labour power occurs through an unpaid mobilisation of female labour and exploitation of affective feelings between parents and children (142). In the tendency towards the destruction of the family and affective relationships and their replacement with 'profitability', Meillassoux sees 'the last stage of the metamorphosis of human beings into capital, their strength and intelligence into commodities, and "the wild fruit of women" into investments' (144).

2.3 In the 1980s, women's studies took up themes that linked the form of FW with an analysis of social relations. While Maria **Mies**, Veronika **Bennholdt-Thomsen**, and Claudia **von Werlhof**, among others, expected the generalisation of subsistence labour to provide the solution to world problems, a general discussion was sparked in feminism by the question of the "forgotten" H in **Marx**'s value theory. Following **Dalla Costa** (1972), some approaches expanded the theory of value to include H, now claimed to be 'productive', because it reproduces labour power as a commodity in the form of personal services and thus increases surplus value behind the back of industrial production. In this, it was argued, the role of women is made invisible in the form of FW. According to these axioms, women, too, produce more value than is necessary for their own reproduction; the unpaid appropriation of this surplus value supposedly enters into the profit of capital. In this argument, the family is regarded as the centre of social production, H as the 'blind spot in the critique of political economy' (**von Werlhof** 1988).

The more than ten-year long international debate about H and value theory (the DL debate) had something strangely academic about its radicalism. Instead of forcing practices from one domain (H) into the theory about another domain (wage labour), it seems to be more useful to continue investigating the separation and connection of both domains, with their different logics and functions for the reproduction of society. Despite the justifiable protest against the disregard for domestic work, simply classifying DL as a kind of equivalent to wage labour tacitly abandons almost everything that the women's movement had begun to fight for: the critique of the family form, of the gendered division of labour, of the alienated form of wage labour, and of capitalism. Even if only through some conceptual magic, the assertion that H is also productive was able to remove from this form of labour division the stigma of denying housewives the opportunity to exist without male breadwinners.

The debate continued primarily in the USA. In their book *Bringing It All Back Home* (1994), **Fraad**, **Resnick**, and **Wolff** try to apply the concept of class to household practices. They come to the conclusion that there are two uneven modes of class production next to one another, feudal and capitalist. In their view, the fact that the individual practices partially contradict each other and that the structural demands on those who divide their lives between domestic and public space are inhomogeneous gives rise to a potential for protest. – This way of illustration is not incompatible with **Marx**, but it shifts the weight of the analysis from the critique of the dominant modes of rule and economy to the problem of coexistence (articulation) of differently organised relations of domination.

3. Capitalist development relies on activities and related needs that can exist on the market, and which, in terms of the expenditure of time, are therefore "worthwhile". What falls by the wayside are forms of production and activities whose specificity lies in an extensive expenditure of time without a correspondingly marketable product. It is in their very logic that the majority of agricultural activities, as well as forest and nature conservation, and also the raising of human beings, are not compatible with the logic of time reduction. (Some attempts by agribusiness have created those gruesome products that **Brecht** foresaw: 'You will no longer recognise the fruits by their taste.') Insofar as the products obtained in this way are indispensable for human survival in the short term, this development propels a division of mankind into those who can maintain themselves on the market and those 'partial humans' who operate below the level of the average human being. In this, the 'Third World' and its immiseration are announced. In the First World countries, development is more complicated. For one thing, women have a hard time subsisting

as long as they have to engage in 'non-waged activities' – this is true even when they are employed. Their position is economically cushioned by a husband as the family breadwinner, as **Marx** and **Engels** already mentioned. But many of these activities – let's call them 'time-consuming' – are simply left undone. In these cases, humanity does not develop. The process of capitalist development of the productive forces and of the corresponding needs goes hand in hand with a brutalisation of humanity. Crime, drugs, and alcohol are merely the visible signs of a model of civilisation in which human development is subordinated to that of an extremely rationalised expenditure of labour time in the interests of profit and the products that are only being manufactured in this way. This reality continues to be, in a sense, a by-product of general industrial development and women's work, and yet is far removed from the fact that the progress of the material forces of production could at least partially set human beings free to take their own development as human beings into their own hands. In this way, **Fourier**'s statement, adopted by **Marx**, that the degree of human development can be measured by the degree of women's emancipation, remains current. This measure concerns the relationships between human beings, their needs, their relation to their sensuality, to nature surrounding them, to the work of their hands and heads, even to themselves as human individuals.

Frigga Haug
Translated by Jacob Blumenfeld

Bibliography

R. **Bauböck**, *Hausarbeit und Ausbeutung*, Vienna 1988.

M. **Dalla Costa**, 'Women and the Subversion of Community', *The Power of Women and the Subversion of Community*, ed. S. James, M. Dalla Costa, London 1972, 21–56.

H. **Fraad**, S. **Resnick**, R. **Wolff**, *Bringing It All Back Home: Class, Gender & Power in the Modern Household*, London 1994.

F. **Haug**, K. **Hauser**, 'Geschlechterverhältnisse: Zur internationalen Diskussion um Marxismus-Feminismus', Projekt sozialistischer Feminismus, *Geschlechterverhältnisse*, AS 110, Berlin/W 1984, 9–102.

C. **Meillassoux**, *Maidens, Meal and Money: Capitalism and the Domestic Community* (1975), Cambridge 1981.

M. **Mies**, *Subsistenzproduktion, Hausfrauisierung, Kolonisierung*, Cologne 1983.

C. **Neusüß**, *Die Kopfgeburten der Arbeiterbewegung oder Die Genossin Luxemburg bringt alles durcheinander*, Hamburg 1985.

S. **Pohl**, *Entwicklung und Ursachen der Frauenlohndiskriminierung: Ein feministisch-marxistischer Erklärungsansatz*, Frankfurt/M 1984.
C.v. **Werlhof**, M. **Mies**, V. **Bennholdt-Thomsen**, *Women: The Last Colony*, London 1988.
K. **Young**, C. **Wolkowitz**, R. **McCullagh** (eds.), *Of Marriage and the Market: Women's Subordination in International Perspective*, London 1981.

→ birth control, class in itself/for itself, development, division of labour, domestic community, domestic-labour debate, factory, family, form, Housewifisation (of labour), individual work, manufacture, Marxism-Feminism, model of civilisation, mode of production, nature, needs, reproduction, subsistence production, wage labour, women's emancipation, women's work, work

→ Arbeit, Arbeitsteilung, Bedürfnis, Eigenarbeit, Entwicklung, Fabrik, Familie, Form, Frauenarbeit, Frauenemanzipation, Geburtenkontrolle, häusliche Gemeinschaft, Hausarbeitsdebatte, Hausfrauisierung, Klasse an sich/für sich, Lohnarbeit, Manufaktur, Marxismus-Feminismus, Natur, Produktionsweise, Reproduktion, Subsistenzproduktion, Zivilisationsmodell

CHAPTER 16

Fetish Character of the Commodity

A: taʾlīh as-silʿa. – F: caractère fétiche de la marchandise. – G: Fetischcharakter der Ware. – R: fetišistskij charakter tovara. – S: carácter fetichista de la mercancía. – C: shāngpǐn de bàiwùjiào xìngzhì 商品的拜物教性质

'F' is derived from the Portuguese *feitiço*, 'sorcery', in which the semantic substance of the Latin *factitius* – from *facere*, 'to make': "artificial", 'made by art', i.e. something manufactured (Georges) – is preserved. The term was coined by Christian missionaries on the West Coast of Africa, armed with cross and sword, to designate the cult objects of the "natives". Introduced by Charles **de Brosses** (1760/2017) to characterise a presumed primitive form of religion (see **Lanczkowski** 1983), fetishism became firmly established in European linguistic usage in the first half of the 19th cent. (see **Böhme** 1997, 12 et sqq.; **Wildermuth** 1970, 169 et sq.; **Marxhausen** 1988a; **Pietz** 1993).

Marx took up the term, as Pierre le Pesant de **Boisguilbert** had before him: he uses FCC to refer to certain aspects of the complex context of the capitalist inversion of subject and object, the alienation of labour, and the reification of social relations. In this context, the central thesis is that only in capitalism are the socioeconomic relations of the members of society mediated by commodities and money in a way in which their effects intervene in the lives of individuals, peoples, and entire continents as if they are 'overwhelming natural laws, governing them irrespective of their will' (*C III*, 969 [MEW 25/839]). It is a power that cannot be broken by means of enlightenment, but only by abolishing its causes. Thus the 'conversion of Africa into a preserve for the commercial hunting of blackskins' (*C I*, 915 [MEW 23/779]) prepared a linguistic formation, the most influential consequence of which was the usage of the terms F, fetishism, and FC by **Marx** and within Marxism for a critique of capitalism.

Marx's engagement with relations and phenomena, which would lead to the elaboration of the theory of the FCC in his later economic writings, began in the early 1840s and would continue into the 1870s. This theory first began to attract intense interest in the 20th cent. Predominant within it was the discussion of the phenomenon of reification. Individual critical threads have appropriated Marx's specifications from the perspectives of *Lebensphilosophie* (philosophy of life), art theory, and cultural anthropology; they are also incorporated into the critique of the underdevelopment of the Third World as a

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_017
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

global problem. Sigmund **Freud**'s theory of sexual fetishism led to attempts to link both these conceptions of fetishism.

1. **Marx** encounters the term in 1842 in his studies on the history of religion (see MEGA IV.1, 320 et sqq.) and adopts the concept in order to analogise, following Ludwig **Feuerbach**'s critique of religion, secular and religious forms of inversion, and to criticise them from the standpoint of the Enlightenment (see MECW 1/147, 189 [MEGA I.1/135,177]). With the Paris Manuscripts of 1844 (*Ms 44*), fetishism was integrated into the investigation of economic relations (see MECW 3/290 et sqq., 312 [MEGA I.2/257 et sqq., 286]). That was new in **Marx**'s work, but not in political economy. **Boisguilbert**, whose work **Marx** assessed in his *Ms 44*, had already demanded that measures be taken against 'fetishism with regard to money' (1695, 166; see MEGA IV.3, 44 et sq.). – From the *Gr* to the actual text body of the first edition of *C I* (1867), the term serves primarily to characterise bourgeois economic thought (see MECW 29/77 [*Gr*, 687; MEGA II.1.2/567]; *C I*, 773 [II.5/50 et sq.]). It was only in the *Appendix* to the first edition, written during the proofreading process in order to clarify the first chapter, that fetishism was first determined in the context of the basic form of value as the 'fourth peculiarity of the equivalent form' (see **Dragstedt** 1976, 59 [MEGA II.5/637 et sq.]). In the second edition (1872), **Marx** integrates *The FCC and its Secret* into the first chapter (cf. *C I*, 163 [MEGA II.6/102 et sq.]). The fact that these interventions with regard to terminology and presentation are the most serious in the case of the revision of the second edition of *C I* expresses both a struggle for theoretical clarity as well as the significance of the problem in the CPE.

1.1 **Marx**'s point of departure is the peculiarity that a useful object, 'an ordinary sensuous thing', is transformed 'into a thing which transcends sensuousness' in its role as a commodity (*C I*, 163 [MEW 23/85]). The aspect of the commodity that 'transcends sensuousness' consists in the regulative market behaviour of the products of labour, which cannot be influenced by the will of commodity owners, by means of which the socialisation of private acts of labour is realised in the form of commodities. The products of labour must succeed in the market in the '*salto mortale*' of transforming their value into money and having the labour expended privately on their production recognised as social labour (200 et sq. [120]). If that fails, the social living conditions of the commodity owners begin to falter.

The products of labour taking on a life of their own with regard to their producers is immanent to the commodity form; within it, '[t]he equality of the kinds of human labour takes on a physical form in the equal objectivity of the

products of labour as values; the measure of the expenditure of human labour-power by its duration takes on the form of the magnitude of the value of the products of labour; and finally the relationships between the producers, within which the social characteristics of their labours are manifested, take on the form of a social relation between the products of labour' (164 [86]). Thus, the relation of producers to the results of the total labour of society is inverted into a 'power of the made over the makers' (**Haug** 1974, 167).

The FCC arises from the relations between private producers under a division of labour, 'which assumes here, for them, the fantastic form of a relation between things. In order, therefore, to find an analogy we must take flight into the misty realm of religion. There the products of the human brain appear as autonomous figures endowed with a life of their own, which enter into relations both with each other and with the human race. So it is in the world of commodities with the products of men's hands. I call this the fetishism which attaches itself to the products of labour as soon as they are produced as commodities, and is therefore inseparable from the production of commodities' (*C I*, 165 [MEW 23/86 et sq.]).

No more should be read into the analogy than what it seeks to express: religious as well as fetishistic thought are classified as an unmediated reflex of forms of practice, in which the inversion of subject and object is reproduced (MECW 34/398 et sq. [MEGA II.4.1, 64 et sq.]), whereby it is certainly not uninteresting for **Marx** to be able to critically name a system-specific irrationality of enlightened bourgeois society due to the spell cast by the FCC. He therefore criticises, by means of analogy, Christian owners of private property as idolaters of their wealth, consisting in money or material assets (MECW 1/262 [MEGA I.1/236]); it serves to mock 'enlightened political economy' as 'Catholics' and 'fetishists' of metal money (MECW 3/290 [MEGA I.2, 257]). In interest-bearing capital, the favourite child of vulgar economics, 'the transubstantiation, the fetishism, is complete' (MECW 32/494 [MEGA II.3.4/1494]). And with this, by means of the simile of the transformation of the "substance" of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ through the priestly word during the sacrifice of the Mass, the analogy is drawn between FCC and Catholicism.

To de-naturalise these F forms which are "self-evident" to everyday understanding, in *C I* **Marx** sketches various societal conditions in which there is no objective dependency of individuals, in order to substantiate the thesis that the objective interrelation of individuals is a 'historical product' (*C I*, 173 et sqq. [MEW 23/95]; see also *C III*, 969 et sq. [25/839]), and 'the whole mystery of commodities' disappears in non-capitalist forms of production. Marx presents (169 et sqq. [90 et sqq.]) Robinson Crusoe on the island, then examines the medieval *corvée* as well as the peasant family producing for its own needs, and concludes

with an 'association of free men' whose relationships 'in production as well as in distribution' (172 [93]) occur without commodity exchange and are therefore transparent to them.

1.2 Even if this problematic is initially dealt with at the level of abstraction of commodity and money, where the 'money F is therefore the riddle of the commodity F, now become visible and dazzling to our eyes' (*C I*, 187 [108]), the examination of the FCC aims at the fetishism of capital. **Marx** concentrates his critique on the theory of factors of production favoured in bourgeois thought (even at the end of the 20th cent.) – Adam **Smith**'s dogma, which he apostrophises ironically as 'the Trinity Formula' (*C III*, 953 [MEW 25/822]) – according to which capital, land, and labour interact as indispensable elements of all production, yielding as sources of revenue to their owners profit or interest, ground rent, and wages (see **Smith**, *Wealth*, vol. 1; MECW 30/393 [MEGA II.3.2/379 et sqq.]; MECW 32/449 et sq. [MEGA II.3.4/1450 et sqq.]). The source of profit is here located in capital itself, which becomes a 'thing', one, however, 'which embodies, which has absorbed, the social relationship, a thing which has acquired a fictitious life and independent existence in relation to itself, a natural-supernatural entity; in this form of capital and profit it appears superficially as a ready-made precondition' (MECW 32/484 [II.3.4/1482 et sq.]).

The division of profit into interest and profit of enterprise disguises the capitalist as a 'worker', and his profit appears as 'wages of superintendence of labour' (*C III*, 504 [MEW 25/393]). With the 'externalization' of the capital relation in interest-bearing capital (for which **Marx** creates the formula *M-M'*), the 'capital mystification' is consummated in 'the most flagrant form' (516 [405]); the social form of wealth exists purely objectively, it 'exists alongside wealth itself as a *thing*' (708 [589]), its growth evidently due to the self-generation by money-dealing capital, independent of production. The intertwined inversions ultimately result from the essence of the forms of value. Thus the FCC proves to be the key to analysing the capital F. The FCC is inscribed into all forms of capital.

1.3 The CPE is at the same time an analysis of capitalist relations of production and a critique of bourgeois economic theories. This duality is also demonstrated in the FCC: it is determined on the one hand as a structural given (MECW 32/513 [MEGA II.3.4/1511]), on the other hand as 'fetishism' related to the cognitive imprisonment of economists in objective appearances (see MECW 3/312 [MEGA I.2/286]; *C I*, 176 [MEW 23/97]). The contrast between classical economics and vulgar economics, repeatedly emphasised by **Marx**, is relativised in this respect: classical economists also remain imprisoned within

such objective appearances, regarding 'people's social relations of production, and the determinations acquired by things subsumed under these relations, as *natural properties* of the things' (MECW 29/77 [*Gr*, 687]), which Marx evaluates as 'crude materialism', 'idealism', and 'fetishism' (ibid.; see also MECW 30/395 [II.3.2/381]). According to **Althusser**, this sequence of labels, which confounds binary understanding, reflects **Marx**'s difficulty in finding a term to differentiate between himself and his predecessors (DKL, II, 257).

The fact that for the capitalist, capital ownership is accounted for as interest, that landed property yields rent to its owner, and that the performance of labour is remunerated with wages, describes factual relations of distribution. But the 'ostensible sources', the 'three-in-one', belong to 'completely disparate spheres and have not the slightest analogy with one another. Their mutual relationship is like that of lawyer's fees, beetroot and music' (*C III*, 953 [MEW 25/822]). Their trinity 'corresponds to the self-interest of the dominant classes, since it preaches the natural necessity and perpetual justification of their sources of income and erects this into a dogma' (969 [839]).

With the status of a general economic theory, this dogma immunises the capitalist form of rule against criticism. Explicitly used by ideologues for this purpose, the FCC goes from being a 'socially valid, and therefore objective' way of conceiving social exchange relations (*C I*, 169 [MEW 23/90]), to a central element of discourses of legitimation. Without being ideological in and of itself, the FCC favours the ideational reproduction of relations of domination.

2. The reception of *Capital* in the first half century following its publication completely ignored the FCC; it was neither the object of theoretical treatment nor of political dispute. In a time when social democracy's influence was growing daily both within and beyond the labouring masses, it was considered irrefutable that the proletarian class viewpoint was the guarantor of scientific knowledge; this is why partisanship in favour of capital was seen to be the cause of bourgeois scholarly thought being caught up in the FCC (see *Verkappte Theologie*, 1883, 329; **Kautsky** 1886, 50; **Luxemburg**, GW 1.2, 386; **Kliwansky** 1914, 127). **Lenin** assumes that, through awareness being raised by the Party, spontaneity can be overcome and the masses can be raised up to the level of socialist consciousness (see CW 5/375 et sq.). The FCC is of no interest to him. In Franz **Mehring**'s biography of **Marx**, *C I* is discussed, but the FCC is left out. A bit later, with **Lukács**'s *History and Class Consciousness* (1923), the FCC will suddenly move to the centre of intellectual engagement with **Marx**. From this point on, the FCC would stand for the ideological power of capitalist forms as such, and therefore as the main source for the false consciousness of the proletariat.

2.1 **Marx** remarks in passing in the *Results of the Immediate Process of Production* that the worker is also caught up in objectification [*Versachlichung*] (*C I*, 1007 et sq. [MEGA II.4.1/81]), but Oskar **Negt** is probably right in his assumption that **Marx** did not see in that any special obstacle to revolutionary agitation: 'however much reification may have an effect on the proletariat, it does not seem to be constitutive, but rather easily surmountable in the process of collective emancipation' (1984, 118 et sq.). – **Lukács**'s point of departure is the designation of the commodity, which he, going much further than **Marx**'s analysis of the value-form as the elementary cell form of bourgeois wealth, conceives of as 'the universal category of society as a whole' (*HCC*, 86). Because, in his argumentation, the commodity structure dominates all social relationships, knowledge of it can reveal all relationships as reified (83 et sqq.). Where Marx focuses his investigations on the economic structure of capitalist society, **Lukács** identifies the latter with the social totality (see **Ette** 1998, 422 et sqq.). **Lukács**, building upon the first *Thesis on Feuerbach*, understands the consciousness of the proletariat as 'the self-consciousness of the object', i.e. 'the act of becoming conscious' overthrows '*the objective form of its object*' (*HCC*, 178). In the Lukács school, it could therefore be assumed that 'the theoretical description of the semblance implies the beginning of its practical overcoming' (**Almási** 1977, 16). Oskar **Negt** and Alexander **Kluge** counter: 'Commodity fetishism cannot be banished from the earth by sheer elucidation of its social origins. Rather, it can be quelled only through counterproduction' (2014, 251).

For Karl **Korsch**, one of the first theorists to respond to **Lukács**'s essay, 'commodity fetishism' and 'the concept of value' are among the 'forms of social consciousness' which constitute the 'basic economic ideology of bourgeois society' (1923/1970, 83 et sq.). For **Korsch**, that was why, during **Marx**'s 'philosophical phase' he referred to all economic categories such as commodity, money, capital, wage labour, interest, credit, etc. as 'human self-alienation', and during his 'scientific phase' as 'the fetishism of commodity-production' (1938, 107). For decades, this interpretation would result in a backlash against **Marx**, who was criticised for the Young Hegelian or Feuerbachian conception of fetishism and inversion that supposedly underpins his entire body of work (see **Erckenbrecht** 1976, 7 et sqq., 110 et sqq., **Helmich** 1980, 200 et sqq.; **Sloterdijk** 1983, 62 et sqq.).

Jürgen **Habermas** follows the ideology-theoretical reading of the FCC established by **Korsch**: '[a]s commodity, money, and capital fetishism, the capitalist production process inverts economic categories at all stages to a platonic in itself, and produces that objective semblance of ideology which first guarantees its functioning: without the commodity fetish, no commodity circulation' (1957, 437).

2.2 Walter **Benjamin** planned in 1935 for the 'focus' of his *Arcades Project* to be the 'unfolding' of the FCC (1989, 159), an act of tracking down the 'signatures' of the materialised ideology of the Parisian grand bourgeoisie, particularly the arcades and other 'places of pilgrimage to the commodity fetish' (1999, 7). The allegory 'correspond[s] perfectly' to the FCC: '[h]ow the price of goods in each case is arrived at can never quite be foreseen, neither in the course of their production nor later when they enter the market. It is exactly the same with the object in its allegorical existence [...] Hence, the allegorist is in his element with commercial wares. As flâneur, he has empathized with the soul of the commodity; as allegorist, he recognizes in the "price tag", with which the merchandise comes on the market, the object of his broodings – the meaning' (368 et sq.). The 'dialectical image' of the commodity 'as fetish' is a 'dream image' (10), while Theodor W. **Adorno** objects that 'commodity fetishism is not a fact of consciousness; it is rather dialectical in character, in the eminent sense that it produces consciousness' (letter to **Benjamin**, 02.08.1935, *Correspondence*, 105).

Adorno's approach to the FCC, however, goes far beyond his own objections to **Benjamin**. The term dominates – both methodologically and in terms of content – his essay *On the Fetish Character in Music and the Regression of Listening* (1938/1991) – in which he confronts the bourgeois culture industry, exemplified by the commercialisation of musical life in the USA in the 1920s and 1930s. Following **Lukács**, **Adorno** derives from the fact that musical works are by default produced for the market, that 'exchange value deceptively takes over the function of use value. The specific FC of music lies in this quid pro quo. The feelings which go to the exchange value create the appearance of immediacy at the same time as the absence of a relation to the object belies it. It has its basis in the abstract character of exchange value' (2001, 39). The fetishised works become 'cultural goods', and 'experience constitutive changes as a result. They become vulgarised. Irrelevant consumption destroys them' (40).

In contrast to **Benjamin**, for whom 'for the first time in world history, technological reproducibility emancipates the work of art from its parasitic subservience to ritual' (1936/2002, 106), **Adorno** criticises the fact that, with recordings tossed onto the market en masse and nationwide radio broadcasts of musical performances, 'the last pre-capitalist residues have been eliminated' (2001, 38). As a result, 'all the mysteries of personality, inwardness, inspiration and spontaneity' have been lost (41).

Adorno's application of the theory of the FCC to music was soon criticised by Hans **Mayer** (1939a/b), which **Adorno** and Max **Horkheimer** reacted to with a counter-criticism. **Mayer**, through the dispute with **Adorno**, calls **Lukács**'s concept of reification into question, and indirectly accuses him of a failed understanding of the FCC (see 1939a, 375; 1939b, 409). The central point

of his critique of **Adorno** is the latter's claim that exchange value replaces the use value of music. It is 'inappropriate' to force cultural processes into a 'Procrustean bed' of economic categories (379). Adorno – and with him, **Horkheimer** – fails to provide concrete evidence of the 'mediations' by means of which the laws of commodity production directly influence the world of contemporary musical life; what **Adorno** provides is 'homespun economism' (1939a, 379; see 1939b, 410).

2.3 The controversial interpretation of the relationship between the concepts of FCC and alienation follows the publication of *Ms 44*. Many authors understand the FCC to be a more scientific version of the theory of alienation of 1844, which still exhibits anthropological tendencies; according to this understanding, in the CPE there can no longer be a stand-alone treatment of the alienation of labour (see **LeRoy** 1965, 9; **Marković** 1967, 182; **Tuchscheerer** 1973, 273 et sq.; **Narski** 1985, 55; **Fetscher** 1985, 64). Other authors counter that alienation and FCC are aspects of a unified state of affairs, differing only in that the main aspect of alienation is not the FC, but 'the separation of the conditions of labour from labour, and the separation of the labour and its fruits from the producer' (**Rosental** 1969, 277).

Still others regard alienation as a phenomenon of production, and FC as a phenomenon of circulation (see **Drohla**/**Heppener**/**Pötzscher** 1985, 21 et sq.), whereby the forms of value, as the original nexus of the FCC, are assigned to circulation, rather than being conceived as an expression of the relations of production. According to Alfred **Oppolzer**, **Marx**'s mature work contains a 'developed conception of alienation' with two levels: '*general* alienation' as 'commodity fetishism and reification in their various forms' shapes 'social relations in society as a whole', and '*particular* alienation' characterises 'the relationship of producers to their activity' as 'alienated labour' (HKWM 3, 463). This builds upon a metaphorical use of the term alienation by Marx, where for example he refers to interest-bearing capital as the 'most estranged and peculiar form' of capital (*C III*, 968 [MEW 25/837]), thus applying a concept relating to human subjects to the FC of capital. – Georges **Labica** (1989) opposes the reduction of the theory of fetishism to 'a problematic of alienation/reification [...]; the *reality* remains one of exploitation, which the exchange process does not mask to the degree that the contradictions disappear, including those at the level of ideological forms' (KWM 8, 1412).

3. Liberation theology has made use of the 'affinity of meaning between the biblical struggle against idolatry and the Marxist critique of commodity fetishism' (**Löwy** 1996, 111 et sq.). Here, **Marx**'s theological metaphors, inspired

by the critique of religion, acquire a 'strictly religious sense' (118). The notion that the market brings about the 'religion of the commodity' (**Segbers** 1996, 81) is not put forward by all liberation theologists (see **Assmann/Hinkelammert** 1984, 9, quoted in **Löwy** 1996, 115 et sq.); consistently, the market is characterised as idolatry in the sense of belief 'in a false god' (**Segbers** 1996, 83). – 'The idol is not created by the gilder' as Baltasar **Gracián** observed at the time of the colonisation of Latin America, 'but by the genuflector' (1653/1993, 3). But Marxist-informed liberation theology has learned that the traditional ecclesiastical-ideological explanation that destruction comes from the soul of man does not hold, and that the question of what makes individuals worshippers of the golden calf points the way out of ideology: people 'take on the characteristics of the creations of their hands' (**Füssel** 1996, 142), thus the FCC culminates in the power of these creations over those who make them, and the circle of the fetishes of the capitalist world closes to become what **Marx** termed the 'religion of everyday life' (*C III*, 969 [MEW 25/838]), which is characterised by the fact that "common sense" feels at home in fetishistic and alienated forms.

Thomas Marxhausen
Translated by Alexander Locascio

Bibliography

Th.W. **Adorno**, 'On the Fetish Character in Music and the Regression of Listening' (1938), *The Culture Industry*, London-New York 1991.

Th.W. **Adorno**, W. **Benjamin**, *The Complete Correspondence, 1928–1940*, Cambridge (MA) 2001.

M. **Almási**, *Phänomenologie des Scheins: Die Seinsweise der gesellschaftlichen Scheinformen*, Budapest 1977 (Eng. *The Philosophy of Appearances*, Boston 1989).

H. **Assmann**, F.J. **Hinkelammert** et al. (eds.), *Die Götzen der Unterdrückung und der befreiende Gott*, Münster 1984.

W. **Benjamin**, *The Correspondence of Walter Benjamin and Gershom Scholem, 1932–1940*, New York 1989.

W. **Benjamin**, *The Arcades Project*, Cambridge (MA) 1999.

W. **Benjamin**, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility: Second Version' (1936), *Selected Writings, vol. 3, 1935–1938*, Cambridge (MA) 2002.

H. **Böhme**, 'Das Fetischismus-Konzept von Marx und sein Kontext', *INITIAL*, vol. 8, 1997, no. l/2, 8–23.

P.le Pesant de **Boisguilbert**, 'Eine Abhandlung über das Wesen des Reichtums, des

Geldes und der Steuern nebst Darstellung der falschen Vorstellungen, die darüber herrschen' (1695), *Denkschriften zur wirtschaftlichen Lage im Königreich Frankreich*, ed. A. Toepel, Berlin/GDR 1986, 161–231 (Eng. *Treatise on the Nature of Wealth, Money, and Taxation*, transl. P. Groenewegen, Sydney 2000).

C.de **Brosses**, 'On the Worship of Fetish Gods: Or, A Parallel of the Ancient Religion of Egypt with the Present Religion of Nigritia' (1760), *The Returns of Fetishism*, ed. R.C. Morris/D.H. Leonard, Boston 2017.

A. **Dragstedt**, *Value: Studies by Karl Marx*, London 1976.

H. **Drohla**, S. **Heppener**, H. **Pötzscher**, 'Zum Marxschen Entfremdungsbegriff, seiner Herausbildung, seinem Inhalt und seinem Platz im Marxschen Denken', *Zum Inhalt und zur Funktion des Entfremdungsbegriffs bei Karl Marx*, AGW beim ZK der SED, Thematische Information und Dokumentation, Reihe B, no. 50, Berlin/GDR 1985, 7–28.

U. **Erckenbrecht**, *Das Geheimnis des Fetischismus: Grundmotive der Marxschen Erkenntniskritik*, Frankfurt/M-Cologne 1976.

W. **Ette**, 'Warenkunst: Prolegomena zu einer marxistischen Theorie der Musik', Klein/Mahnkopf 1998, 415–42.

I. **Fetscher**, *Karl Marx und der Marxismus: Von der Ökonomiekritik zur Weltanschauung*, Munich 1985 (Eng. *Marx and Marxism*, New York 1971).

K. **Füssel**, 'Der Kult des Goldes, die Zerstörung des Menschen und der Zorn Gottes', Jacob et al. 1996, 130–49.

B. **Gracián**, *The Art of Worldly Wisdom* (1653), transl. M. Fischer, New York 1993.

J. **Habermas**, 'Literaturbericht zur philosophischen Diskussion um Marx und den Marxismus (1957)', *Theorie und Praxis: Sozialphilosophische Studien* (1963), Neuwied-Berlin/W 1971, 387–463.

W.F. **Haug**, *Vorlesungen zur Einführung ins 'Kapital'*, Cologne 1974, 5th edn., Berlin/W-Hamburg 1985.

W.F. **Haug**, 'The Camera Obscura of Consciousness: A Critique of the Subject/Object-Articulation in Marxism', Berlin/W 1984 (www).

W.F. **Haug**, *Elemente einer Theorie des Ideologischen*, AS 203, Hamburg 1993.

H.-J. **Helmich**, *'Verkehrte Welt' als Grundgedanke des Marxschen Werkes: Ein Beitrag zum Problem des Zusammenhanges des Marxschen Denkens*, Frankfurt/M-Bern-Cirencester 1980.

M. **Horkheimer**, Letter to H. Mayer (23 March 1939), Klein/Mahnkopf 1998, 400–05.

W. **Jacob**, J. **Moneta**, F. **Segbers** (eds.), *Die Religion des Kapitalismus: Die gesellschaftlichen Auswirkungen des totalen Marktes*, Luzern 1996.

K. **Kautsky**, '"Das Elend der Philosophie" und "Das Kapital", Teil II', *NZ*, vol. 4, 1886, 46–63.

R. **Klein**, C.-S. **Mahnkopf** (eds.), *Mit den Ohren denken: Adornos Philosophie der Musik*, Frankfurt/M 1998.

S. **Kliwansky**, 'Zur Kritik der Nationalökonomie', *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*, vol. 39, 1914/15, no. 1, 125–49.
K. **Korsch**, *Marxism and Philosophy* (1923), New York 1970.
K. **Korsch**, *Karl Marx* (1938), Leiden-Boston 2016.
G. **Labica**, 'Warenfetischismus' (1982), KWM 8, 1989, 1410–12.
G. **Lanczkowski**, 'Fetischismus', *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, vol. XI, Berlin/W-New York 1983, 143 et sq.
G.C. **LeRoy**, 'The Concept of Alienation: An Attempt at a Definition', *Marxism and Alienation*, ed. H. Aptheker, New York 1965, 8–14.
M. **Löwy**, 'Der Götze Markt', Jacob et al. 1996, 109–19.
M. **Marković**, 'Entfremdung und Selbstverwaltung', *Folgen einer Theorie: Essays über "Das Kapital" von Karl Marx*, Frankfurt/M, 1967.
Th. **Marxhausen**, 'Die Entwicklung des Begriffs "Fetischismus" bei Marx', *Arbeitsblätter zur Marx-Engels-Forschung 22*, Halle 1988(a), 42–68.
Th. **Marxhausen**, 'Die Theorie des Fetischismus im dritten Band des "Kapitals"', *MEF* 25, Berlin/GDR 1988(b), 209–43.
H. **Mayer**, 'Bemerkungen zu einer kritischen Musiktheorie (I)' (1939a), Klein/Mahnkopf 1998, 369–99.
H. **Mayer**, 'Bemerkungen zu einer kritischen Musiktheorie (II)' (1939b), ibid., 406–14.
I.S. **Narski**, 'Das Problem der Entfremdung bei der Herausbildung und Entwicklung der Lehre von Karl Marx und einige unserer gegenwärtigen Probleme', *Zum Inhalt und zur Funktion des Entfremdungsbegriffs bei Karl Marx*, AGW beim ZK der SED, Thematische Information und Dokumentation, Reihe B, no. 50, Berlin/GDR 1985, 47–62.
O. **Negt**, 'Was ist und zu welchem Zweck benötigen wir heute eine Erneuerung des Marxismus? Rede zum hundertsten Todestag von Karl Marx', *Prokla* 55, vol. 14, 1984, 106–23.
O. **Negt**, A. **Kluge**, *History and Obstinacy* (1993), ed. D. Fore, transl. R. Langston, New York 2014.
A. **Oppolzer**, 'Entfremdung', HKWM 3, 1997, 460–69.
W. **Pietz**, 'Fetishism and Materialism: The Limits of Theory in Marx', *Fetishism as Cultural Discourse*, Ithaca 1993, 119–51.
M.M. **Rosental**, *Die dialektische Methode der politischen Ökonomie von Karl Marx*, Berlin/GDR 1969.
F. **Segbers**, 'Wider den Götzen Markt – Athen und Jerusalem im Erbe', Jacob et al. 1996, 70–85.
P. **Sloterdijk**, *Critique of Cynical Reason* (1983), Minneapolis 1988.
W. **Tuchscheerer**, *Bevor "Das Kapital" entstand: Die Entstehung der ökonomischen Theorie von Karl Marx*, Berlin/GDR 1973.
'Verkappte Theologie' (anonymous), *NZ*, vol. 1, 1883, no. 7, 329–31.
A. **Wildermuth**, *Marx und die Verwirklichung der Philosophie*, The Hague 1970.

→ abstract labour, alienation, appearance, autonomisation, being/consciousness, camera obscura, capital, commodity, commodity form, consciousness, critique of religion, disenchantment, dual character of labour, false consciousness, essence, Fanonism, flâneur, form of appearance, forms of thought, Frankfurt School, ideology, idol, inversion, inverted world, irrationalism, mediation, Moloch, money, mystification, objectification, objective form of thought, personification, reification, religion, revolution, secret, semblance, spectre, spontaneity, stupidity in music, surface, trinity formula

→ abstrakte Arbeit, Bewußtsein, Camera obscura, Denkform, Doppelcharakter der Arbeit, Dummheit in der Musik, Entfremdung, Entzauberung, Erscheinung/Erscheinungsform, falsches Bewusstsein, Flaneur, Fanonismus, Frankfurter Schule, Geld, Geheimnis, Gespenst, Gott, Ideologiekritik, Ideologietheorie, Irrationalismus, Kapital, Moloch, Mystifikation, Oberfläche, objektive Gedankenform, Personifikation, Religion, Religionskritik, Revolution, Schein, Sein/Bewusstsein, Spontaneität, trinitarische Formel, Verdinglichung, Vergegenständlichung, verkehrte Welt, Verkehrung, Vermittlung, Verselbständigung, Ware, Wertform, Wesen

CHAPTER 17

Free Trade

A: tiğāra ḥurra. – F: libre-échange. – G: Freihandel. – R: cvobodnaja torgovlja. – S: librecambio. – C: zìyóu màoyì 自由贸易

More than 100 years ago, Friedrich **Engels** asked whether socialists should be interested in FT, given that the question of FT and protective tariffs moves 'entirely within the bounds of the present system of capitalist production' (MECW 26/535 [MEW 21/374]). A popular image in contemporary media is that of the (Western) European or North American man beginning his day in cosmopolitan style. All the ingredients of his breakfast, often transported thousands of kilometres, come from the global supermarket. This is usually followed by a reference to the never-ending success story of FT. Was the free circulation of precious metals, which was allowed by Holland in the 17th cent. and by England in the 18th, a wise choice, one of the secrets of their greatness, as Fernand **Braudel** wanted to know, or 'on the contrary, *could only a leading economy permit itself the luxury of taking such a liberty, which held no danger for the very rich*?' (1983, II, 546). In his economic-historical studies, Braudel emphasised that the existing global division of labour is not based on voluntary agreements between equal partners, but rather was 'established progressively as a chain of subordinations, each conditioning the others [...]. In the economic poker game, some people have always held better cards than others, not to say aces up their sleeves' (1984, III, 48).

1. The first writings on FT appeared in England in the 17th cent. Their authors, the *merchant economists*, advocated various protectionist measures, but in the interests of certain business groups, some of them anticipated certain points of FT theory. For example, Thomas **Mun** (1664) and other proponents of the East India Company's trade policy requested that 'manufactures made of foreign materials [...] be exported custom free' (12). This was a new tone in the ranks of the mercantilists, who wanted to increase the wealth of the state – for them, that meant possessing as much precious metal as possible. For those states that did not own precious-metal mines, a favourable trade balance seemed to be the best means for achieving this goal. To do so, it would be necessary to export more goods in terms of value than were imported, so that foreign countries had to pay the difference in precious metals. Thus, high import duties on high-quality manufactured goods and export duties on raw materials were

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_018
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

demanded. Low wages and other low production costs should then make one's own industry as competitive as possible on foreign markets.

Many supporters of FT belonged to the Tory party; their opponents, the Whigs, defended protectionist principles, especially evidenced in their campaign to ban imports of French goods (cf. **Pribram** 1983, 67). In his *Discourses upon Trade* from 1691, Sir Dudley **North** claimed that efforts to keep precious metals in the country by prohibiting their free export were misguided and would only prevent an increase in wealth. It was clear to him that 'Laws to hamper Trade, whether Forreign, or Domestick, relating to Money, or other Merchandizes, are not Ingredients to make a People Rich, and abounding in Money, and Stock' (33).

For François **Quesnay** and the physiocratic school, the basis of society lay in the practical forms of exchange and contact among human beings. In particular, he considered worldwide agricultural trade relations as the realisation of the natural law principle of mutual interdependence as the prerequisite for society as such. Therefore, the grain trade, for example, 'must be favoured through free movement, security, exemption from duty, by means of all the conveniences that can be created for it' (1766, 135). According to him, FT in grains prevents speculative storage during bad harvests and 'keeps the prices always at a medium level' (1756–1759, 267).

In the second half of the 18th cent., public opinion in France tended more and more towards the idea of liberating industry and commerce from the administrative control of Colbertism. A prominent representative of this movement was the merchant Jacques Vincent de **Gournay**, who is said to have coined the exclamation that was henceforth understood as the axiom of economic liberalism: 'Laissez faire, laissez passer, le monde va de lui-même!' (**Gömmel/Klump** 1994, 70 et sq.; **Pribram** 1983, 99) In contrast to **Quesnay**, **Gournay** considered not only agriculture but also trade and industry as productive sectors, and wanted all domestic trade to be freed from government interference. He did not support FT with foreign countries.

2. Adam **Smith**'s theory of absolute cost advantages and **Ricardo**'s theory of comparative cost advantages form the basis of classical international trade theory and thus the foundation of FT theory. In his reflections on foreign trade, **Smith** (*Wealth*, 452 et sqq.) concretises the theorem according to which the wealth of a country increases when two countries each specialise in the production of the good that they can produce more cheaply, i.e., with absolute cost advantages. He rejected the mercantilist policy that sought to achieve export surpluses through customs measures and export-import regulations, and instead, in accordance with the theory of absolute cost advantages, recom-

mended the optimal use of available resources. Free foreign trade in open markets encourages the home market 'to improve its productive powers, and to augment its annual produce to the utmost, and thereby to increase the real revenue and wealth of the society' (413).

For **Ricardo**, the 'system of perfectly free commerce' in a country (Wks 1, 133) is a prerequisite for product innovation and the effective distribution of labour to all branches of an economy. Through the 'liberty of trade', that 'great principle' (Wks 4, 70), 'the universal society of nations throughout the civilized world' is established (Wks 1, 134). **Smith** could not answer the question of what a country should do without any cost advantages in a product. This was the problem **Ricardo** wanted to solve. For international trade, therefore, it is not the absolute prices but the price ratios of different goods in different countries that are important, and these price ratios result from the ratios of labour costs. According to Ricardo, the wealth of two countries also increases if each country specialises in the production of a good which it can produce comparatively cheaper, even though one country is able to produce both goods more cheaply in absolute terms. Because capital cannot migrate freely between different countries and thus no general profit rate can develop for several countries, Ricardo assumed a modification of the law of value in his theory of comparative cost advantages: 'The same rule which regulates the relative value of commodities in one country, does not regulate the relative value of the commodities exchanged between two or more countries' (133). Import duties on grain, for instance, according to Ricardo, inevitably increase ground rents, since they increase the demand for grain produced domestically, and thus its cost and price. On the other hand, repealing these duties and allowing the import of foreign corn at low prices would increase profits and thereby promote capital accumulation (cf. 303–10; Wks 4, 41).

John Stuart **Mill** (1848, 595) expanded **Ricardo**'s theory of foreign trade with a theory of international values, which also took into account the demand for goods in the foreign trading countries. According to this theory, under given supply conditions, the demand for imported goods determines the volume of international trade and the prices of goods. **Mill** criticises all restrictions on international trade as a 'surviving relic of the Mercantile Theory' (592). For him, FT is the 'guarantee of the peace of the world' and thus secures 'the uninterrupted progress of the ideas, the institutions, and the character of the human race' (594). Here the **Kant**ian enlightenment model of progress towards a '*cosmopolitan society* (*cosmopolitismus*)' (*Anthrop*, 236 [WA 7, 331]) is taken up and reformulated in purely economic terms: The free development of all economic subjects now presents itself as the realisation of a universal communality. The developmental dynamic of bourgeois ownership society appears to FT theor-

ists as the embodiment of the unfolding of reason. Morality and reason merge equally with the free movement of trade to form a 'universal economy' (cf. **Richter** 1992, 57).

3. The political movement in the first half of the 19th cent. for FT is one of the first historical examples of the organised political movement of the new industrial bourgeoisie. The political shock of the wars against revolutionary France and a rigid economic protectionism among the major European powers gave rise to a FT movement that presented itself as a peacemaker between the warring European powers. In 1838/39, Richard **Cobden** and other businessmen founded the Anti-Corn Law League in Manchester, which fought for the repeal of preferential tariffs on bread grain, timber, and sugar, initially between England and its colonies. The "Manchester school", which at times also made use of the Chartist movement and took a clear stand against the English landowners, wanted to loosen the economic-political dependency between the colonies and their mother countries and gradually introduce global FT, which, as the basis of the entire network of global economic relations, would ultimately provide the political impetus for peace and world unity. 'FT, the International Law of the Almighty' was Cobden's slogan (quoted by **Mallet** 1903, xxix). The League, generously funded by the export industry of Central England, held numerous meetings, distributed pamphlets nationwide, and also published a weekly agitational newsletter, the *Anti-Corn-Law Circular* (also known as the *Anti-Bread-Tax Circular*). They steadily increased their influence and were even able to send their leaders **Cobden** and Richard **Bright** to parliament after the 1841 elections. In 1846, under the pressure of the famine in Ireland and the unprecedented extra-parliamentary agitation of the League, the grain tariffs were lifted; in 1860, the last remnants of the protective tariff system were removed, and England, the 'workshop of the world', embraced FT (see **Röder** et al. 1982, 105 et sq., 110 et sq.).

4. The capitalist mode of production, as **Marx** states, continued to grow in the 19th cent. into a domestic market secured by protective tariffs and export premiums. 'The system of protection was an artificial means of manufacturing manufacturers, of expropriating independent labourers, of capitalising the national means of production and subsistence, of forcibly abbreviating the transition from the mediaeval to the modern mode of production' (MECW 35/744 et sq. [MEW 23/784 et sq.]). This process was accelerated through, on the one hand, conquering the export markets of other countries. 'They also forcibly rooted out, in their dependent countries, all industry, as, e.g., England did with the Irish woollen manufacture' (745 [785]). On the other hand, domestic

competition within certain countries was destroyed by war and colonisation. Marx counted the 'commercial war of the European nations, with the globe for a theatre' (739 [779]), i.e., the struggle of the Dutch provinces for their independence from Spain, the naval wars between England and Holland in the second half of the 17th cent., England's war against revolutionary France, and the English Opium Wars against China, as moments of "primitive accumulation". England ultimately overcame this stage. It was the first country strong enough to demand free access to other countries' markets, i.e. FT. The wars of liberation in the Spanish colonies of South America and the conquest of the Indian subcontinent, added **Engels**, 'turned the people of all these immense territories into customers for English goods' (MECW 26/522 [MEW 21/361]).

4.1 In 1852 **Marx** could write: 'the Free Traders (the men of the Manchester school, the Parliamentary and Financial Reformers) are the *official representatives of modern English society*, the representatives of that England which rules the market of the world. They represent the party of the self-conscious Bourgeoisie, of industrial capital striving to make available its social power as a political power as well, and to eradicate the last arrogant remnants of feudal society' (MECW 11/333 [MEW 8/342]). FT means 'freedom of capital' (MECW 6/463 [MEW 4/455]) on the world market as '*free import* and *export*' and 'absolute *free movement of capital*, according to its own immanent laws' (MECW 34/262 [MEGA II.3.6/2306]), without assistance from the state, without consideration for political, religious, or mental structures in heterogeneous cultures, and above all '*utter ruthlessness* towards the labouring population, who only figure among the "*faux frais*" of capital' (ibid.). In *Capital*, Marx borrows his examples of the catastrophic overworking of the English working class, of child labour, and the increase in occupational diseases from 'the free-trade period after 1848, that paradisiac age whose commercial travellers spin [*vorfauchen*] such fabulous tales to the Germans, so blatantly and with such a total neglect of economic science' (*C I*, 349, fn. 15 [MEW 23/254, fn. 48]). The use of the word "*vorfauchen*" is an ironic swipe at Julius **Faucher**, who, along with John **Prince-Smith**, was one of the leaders of the German Manchester school, which promoted FT as the end of social misery and war. Land, too, is to be turned into a commodity and 'the exploitation of the soil is to be carried on according to the common commercial laws' (MECW 11/333 [MEW 8/342]). Spending on the royal household, the House of Lords, the Anglican High Church, the standing army, the colonies, the 'whole circumstantial routine of English law', all belong to the '*faux frais* of production' (334 [342]), and among these 'superfluous, unnecessary expenses in production' are the wars of conquest: 'England can exploit foreign nations more cheaply while at peace with them' (ibid.).

In this sense, the 'free trade system works destructively' by eliminating feudal relations and disintegrating old nationalities through trade and change (MECW 6/465 [MEW 4/457); and it is 'necessarily revolutionary' (MECW 11/334 [MEW 8/343]) because only under the condition of absolutely FT can capitalism comprehensively develop technically, economically, and socially. Only then can new markets emerge and old ones expand, economic development take the form of cyclical crises, and modern classes establish themselves and fight out their social conflicts. 'FT is the normal condition of modern capitalistic production' for **Marx**, writes **Engels**, looking back on **Marx**'s participation in the Brussels FT Congress in 1847 (MECW 26/523 [MEW 21/362]).

When the United States and Germany economically overtook Great Britain at the beginning of the 1890s and England was no longer at the vanguard of industrialisation, the British were forced to protect themselves and their markets in third countries. 'FT has exhausted its resources; even Manchester doubts this its quondam economic gospel', comments **Engels** in the preface to the English edition of *C I* (MECW 35/35 [MEW 23/39]) on the near end of the myth of the 'FT millennium' (286 [298]).

4.2 When **Marx** in the *CPE* develops the social equality of individuals from the form of the equivalent exchange of commodities, he concludes from the content of this act the quality of individual freedom. Because it remains up to the individual owner of commodities which of his needs to satisfy and how, and because his driving motive – the movement of value – can remain hidden, an awareness is formed that here 'the complete freedom of the individual is posited' and that 'force on neither side' takes place (*Gr*, MECW 28/176 [MEW 42/170]). With FT, this quality of the bourgeois subject's freedom is cosmopolitanised. Marx deciphers the apologetics of the FT dogma, which construes the 'freedom of one individual in relation to another' as free competition within a society of antagonistic interests and which is then repeated 'in more gigantic proportions in the market of the world' (MECW 6/463 et sq. [MEW 4/456]). In a unified, free, and multilateral world trade system, an international division of labour arose with regard to colonial goods such as coffee, sugar, and cotton, which, according to Marx, was based on British hegemony in the undeveloped world and not, as the FT representatives claimed, on the 'natural destiny' of the colonies (464 [ibid.]). England's flourishing foreign trade in the 19th cent. was also based on its outstanding position in cotton production. Thus, despite FT, there are obviously branches of industry 'which prevail over all others, and secure to the nations which especially foster them the command of the market of the world' (464 [457]).

4.3 The benefits of international trade are very unevenly distributed, but the free traders cannot understand 'how one nation can grow rich at the expense of another' (MECW 6/464 [MEW 4/457]). This same problem exists with **Ricardo**, who 'conceives of [foreign trade] as simple circulation' (*Gr*, MECW 28/242 [MEW 42/236]), the purpose of which is not to increase the exchange values invested in production in advance, but merely to formally mediate products of labour which are non-use-values, and thus superfluous, for the producers in one country, but are use values yet to be realised for the buyers in another country. Ricardo, therefore, does not develop the contradictions of bourgeois society but rather 'shifts them off by considering the value in exchange as indifferent for the formation of wealth' (277 [269, fn.]). Ricardo and the FT school view foreign trade only as a formal, harmonious, and use-value-centred process of distribution between nations and classes.

The political representatives of the FT doctrine conceive of economic crises as the result of contingent, noneconomic influences. In 1855, as the signs of a commercial crisis increased, **Marx** noted, with reference to the pronouncements of the free traders: 'According to the tenets of their school, commercial crises were out of the question after the corn laws were abrogated, and FT principles adopted by the British legislature. [...] They have failed to realize their promises, and naturally enough the war is now to be made the scapegoat of FT, just as the revolution in 1848 was' (MECW 13/585 et sq. [MEW 10/616 et sq.]). On the other hand, the constantly recurring world trade crises are for Marx 'the real concentration and forcible adjustment of all the contradictions of bourgeois economy' (MECW 32/140 [MEW 26.2/510]). For **Ricardo** and his FT epigones, in principle there can be no overproduction and thus no world trade crisis, since for them '*products* are exchanged *against products*' (124 [493]) in capitalist trade. **Marx** proceeds from value as the overarching and procedural totality of production and circulation. Only in this unity of production and circulation can value exist as capital, since value increases quantitatively in it. This value, therefore, also necessarily develops in the international arena, i.e., on the world market: 'But it is only foreign trade, the development of the market to a world market, which causes money to develop into world money and *abstract labour* into social labour' (MECW 32/388 [MEW 26.3/250]). From the economic quality of value arises both the permanent spatial expansion of capitalist production in regions of the world not yet organised by capitalism and the intensive expansion through the multiplication of use values. This requires a hegemonistic strategy of capital between the unevenly developed states in order to transform both the economically contradictory effects of foreign trade, which result from the competition of capitals for extra profits, and the resulting interests of the states into a 'historically specific political-economic expansion project

of capital' (**Girschner** 1999, 227; cf. **Hirsch** 1995). 'The English, for example, are forced to lend their capital to other countries in order to create a market for their commodities. Overproduction, the credit system, etc., are means by which capitalist production seeks to break through its own barriers and to produce over and above its own *limits*. Capitalist production, on the one hand, has this driving force; on the other hand, it only tolerates production commensurate with the profitable employment of existing capital. Hence crises arise, which simultaneously drive it onward and beyond [its own limits] and force it to put on seven-league boots, in order to reach a development of the productive forces which could only be achieved very slowly within its own *bornes* [= limits]' (MECW 32/309 et sq. [MEW 26.3/119]).

Insofar as trade 'brings different countries into the sphere of commerce, discovers new markets etc.', **Marx** speaks of the 'creation of markets' (*Gr*, MECW 29/32 [MEW 42/544]). The "creation of markets" fosters an increasing economic dependency and integration between states, which, however, is never balanced due to competition between private producers on the world market. Marx sees this as the cause of the historically specific international strategies of capital's expansion and hegemony, which can mean, for instance, FT or protectionism, or a graduated mixture of both, or even trade wars. Reviewing export-import statistics, Marx noted in 1861 that 'the economic dependence of France on England is, perhaps, six times as great as the economic dependence of England on France [...]. It then follows that England has now become the principal export market for France, whereas France has remained a quite secondary export market for England. Hence, despite all chauvinism and all Waterloo rodomontade, the nervous dread of a conflict with "perfidious Albion"' (MECW 19/64 [MEW 15/359]).

5. In the context of the debate on imperialism, Marxists after **Marx** dealt with changes in the trade policies of capitalist countries, which, after 1880, led further and further away from FT. For example, **Engels**, as editor of *C III*, identifies at the end of the 19th cent. elements of a new protective tariff policy 'which differs from the old protectionism in that now articles fit for export are those best protected' (MECW 37/122, fn. 16 [MEW 25/130, fn.]). Furthermore, competition on the world market is increasingly determined by 'cartels (trusts)' (ibid.). Rudolf **Hilferding** also comes to the conclusion that by driving foreign competition from the domestic market through the growing cartelisation of production, the protective tariff policy of the already competitive states in Europe secures extra profits for the capitalists by increasing domestic prices, with the consequence that the industrialists dump some of their goods on the world market at giveaway prices. Admittedly, with the development of capitalist pro-

duction, FT would 'amalgamate the whole world market into a single economic territory' and ensure 'the highest possible labour productivity and the most rational international division of labour' (1910, 311). Yet, through their influence on state authority, the industries capable of being cartelised force protective tariffs, thereby securing the national market for the cartel and accelerating international cartelisation. The result is the imperialist struggle for economic territory, which, for example, manifests itself in an aggressive colonial policy (325 et sq.). Yet, opposing the new policy with 'an antiquated policy from the era of FT' cannot be the business of the labour movement. 'The response of the proletariat to the economic policy of finance capital – imperialism – cannot be FT, but only socialism' (366).

On this point, **Lenin** defends **Hilferding** against Karl **Kautsky**, who saw in FT an opportunity for higher growth rates in foreign trade. Thus, according to Kautsky, a peaceful expansion model of imperialism is in principle possible, and should be supported by social democracy. For **Lenin**, FT is an ideal – now turned reactionary – of 'free competition, which has become impossible after it has given rise to monopoly' (*Imp*, CW 22/290 [Werke, 22/295]). At the 10th Party Congress of the Bolsheviks, he announced that in the framework of the NEP, after the period of communist-controlled war economy, 'freedom of trade' and 'free exchange' should be allowed 'within the framework of local economic turnover' (CW 32/218 [Werke, 32/220 et sq.). Thereby, after the catastrophe of the civil war, Soviet Russia was to be given a chance for economic, social, and political development through controlled FT.

In the context of the monopolisation of non-capitalist areas of expansion inside the capitalist states and in the overseas countries, Rosa **Luxemburg** analyses the new international system of protective tariffs. For her, 'the international system of FT would constitute no more than a fleeting episode in the history of capital accumulation' (*Accu*, CW 2, ch. 31), because it 'never constituted the true expression of the interests of capital accumulation as a whole' (ibid.). While in England it was tailored 'to the particular interests of the exporting cotton-manufacturers of Lancashire' (ibid.), it was used by Prussia as a 'measure of political constitution' in order to force Austria out of the German Confederation and the Customs Union. In terms of theory, the 'false doctrine of the British FT school', according to which commodity exchange is the only condition and prerequisite for the accumulation of capital, was linked to the **Ricardo** school, which identifies the reproduction of capital with the circumstances of simple commodity circulation. 'This was subsequently to become even more evident in the practice of the free trader *vulgaris*' (ibid.).

Otto **Bauer** conceptualises the conflict over FT, which raged in England throughout the 1840s, as a struggle against grain tariffs, which brought profits

to the landowners but higher (wage) costs to the industrialists, and was thus a 'class struggle between the old, landowning aristocracy and the industrial bourgeoisie' (WA 4, 632). The old opposition between FT and protective tariffs, i.e., between industry and land ownership, he writes, has 'almost completely disappeared, and actually only commerce has remained oriented towards FT' (937). Only in countries with a high share of exports is there an interest in FT among export-oriented companies. With regard to the labour movement, he therefore distinguishes between wage labourers in industries producing primarily for export and wage labourers in industries producing primarily for domestic trade.

Paul M. **Sweezy** sees the chequered history of FT policy and the policy of limited protection of industrial production as a turning point within capitalist development. While it became necessary for England to import agricultural products on a regular basis as its population increased and concentrated in the industrial-urban centres during the Industrial Revolution, and as the FT manufacturers prevailed in 1846 against the resistance of the landlords who fought to maintain agricultural protective tariffs, 'a similar struggle, though with roles reversed, was going on in the United States' (1942, 295). Here, the industrialism of the North-East, which was in its infancy, demanded protective tariffs in order to develop undisturbed, while the cotton-producing agriculture of the slave-holding South had an interest in cheap industrial products and needed open foreign markets for their export goods; therefore, the South upheld the system of FT. Under these circumstances, the question "FT or tariff" became 'one of the central points of conflict between the north and the south leading to the Civil War' (296).

6. Some arguments from the FT dogma are relentlessly used to this day. While FT was celebrated more than 100 years ago as the beginning of an effortless development, today's neoliberals claim with missionary zeal that "globalisation" and liberalisation will lead to a unified, harmonious, and cooperative global society. FT is seen as a precondition of dynamic world trade and as a medium for intercultural processes of exchange. Price and cost differences between regions and countries could be transformed through FT-mediated processes of exchange into more efficient production and improved supply of goods. FT is even esteemed as the political form of a basic anthropological constant (cf. **Hassel** 1998, 1 et sq.), which winds its way through the centuries in the allegory of the Silk Road.

The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), concluded in 1947, together with the 1994 agreement establishing the World Trade Organisation (WTO), form the central body of rules designed to promote and liberalise world

trade, including the movement of capital, by removing barriers to trade and quantitative restrictions. The WTO had planned 'to turn the whole world into one free trade area' by 2020 (**Martin/Schumann** 1997, 142).

Critical social scientists and politicians confront the promises of a global society linked by FT with socioeconomic reality. Obviously, the intensification of global economic trade relations today goes hand in hand with an increase in marginalised population groups – such as the unemployed, agricultural workers, lower castes and women – child labour, and environmental damage (cf. World Bank 1992). According to **Altvater** and **Mahnkopf**, an 'intensification of international exchange' results in 'considerable pressure on the reproduction conditions of labour power in order to bring unit labour costs into line with the most competitive level on the world market at any given time' (1996, 201). Political attempts to couple a global market economy with an international social order that can impose a legal obligation on rich countries to provide international social transfers have so far failed. In negotiations, there is still great resistance from many industrialised countries on the speed and extent of import tariff cuts in textile and agricultural trade, i.e., in areas where developing countries have cost advantages. The protectionism on the part of the industrialised countries in these areas stands in stark contrast to their FT attitude concerning trade in services and intellectual property rights (cf. **Schreiber** 1997, 44 et sq.). Many argue that, when the WTO rules are updated, the concept of dumping should be extended to include distortions of competition arising from the disregard of environmental human rights and, furthermore, that violations of internationally recognised environmental quality objectives should be considered as illegal export subsidies and/or import discrimination (cf. **Hassel** 1998, 32).

Wolfgang Fritz **Haug** points to the 'sudden increase of international competition for investment', the 'dominance of the monetary society allied with transnational corporations', and the erosion of the welfare state and democratic institutions (1999, 58, 60 et sq.). Joachim **Hirsch** evaluates contemporary globalisation as a new project of capitalist class struggle, whereby, following the collapse of bureaucratic state socialism, the East-West axis of social contradictions has shifted to the conflict between capitalist metropolises. 'This is the reason why the tendency towards liberalisation and FT underlying globalisation is coming undone by a simultaneously growing regional protectionism and the existence of at least latent economic wars' (1998, 24).

Michael Krätke and Gunter Willing
Translated by Jacob Blumenfeld

Bibliography

E. **Altvater**, B. **Mahnkopf**, *Grenzen der Globalisierung*, Münster 1996.

O. **Bauer**, *Werkausgabe* [WA], Vienna 1975–1980.

F. **Braudel**, *Civilization and Capitalism: 15th–18th Century. Vol. I: The Structures of Everyday Life*, London 1981, *Vol. II: The Wheels of Commerce*, London 1983, *Vol. III: The Perspective of the World*, London 1984.

C. **Girschner**, *Politische Ökonomie und Weltmarkt: Allgemeine Weltmarktdynamik in der Marxschen Kritik der politischen Ökonomie*, Cologne 1999.

R. **Gömmel**, R. **Klump**, *Merkantilisten und Physiokraten in Frankreich*, Darmstadt 1994.

C. **Hassel**, 'Nachhaltigkeit, Freihandel und Globalisierung: Von politischen (De)Regulierungsinteressen und liberaler Ordnungskultur', *Diskussionspapier 1998/05*, ed. Wirtschaftswissenschaftliche Dokumentation der TU Berlin, Berlin 1998.

W.F. **Haug**, *Politisch richtig oder Richtig politisch: Linke Politik im transnationalen High-Tech-Kapitalismus*, Berlin-Hamburg 1999.

J. **Hirsch**, *Der nationale Wettbewerbsstaat*, Berlin-Amsterdam 1995.

J. **Hirsch**, *Vom Sicherheitsstaat zum nationalen Wettbewerbsstaat*, Berlin 1998.

R. **Hilferding**, *Finance Capital* (1910), London 1981.

L. **Mallet**, 'Introduction', *The Political Writings of Richard Cobden*, Pref. R. Welby, introd. L. Mallet and W.C. Bryant, vol. 1, London 1903.

H.P. **Martin**, H. **Schumann**, *The Global Trap*, London 1997.

J.S. **Mill**, *Principles of Political Economy*, London 1848.

T. **Mun**, *England's Treasure by Forraign Trade*, London 1664.

Sir Dudley **North**, *Discourses upon Trade*, London 1691.

K. **Pribram**, *A History of Economic Reasoning*, Baltimore 1983.

F. **Quesnay**, 'Bevölkerung' (1756–1759), *Ökonomische Schriften*, ed. M. Kuczynski, vol. 1, Berlin/GDR 1971, 227–335.

F. **Quesnay**, 'Über den Handel' (1766), *Ökonomische Schriften*, vol. 2, Berlin/GDR 1976, 117–84.

E. **Richter**, *Der Zerfall der Welteinheit: Vernunft und Globalisierung in der Moderne*, Frankfurt/M-New York 1992.

K.-H. **Röder** et al., *Das politische System Großbritanniens: Von der englischen bürgerlichen Revolution bis zur Gegenwart*, Berlin/GDR 1982.

S. **Schreiber**, *Freihandel und Gerechtigkeit*, Frankfurt/M-Berlin-Bern-New York-Paris-Vienna 1997.

P.M. **Sweezy**, *The Theory of Capitalist Development*, London 1942.

World Bank (ed.), *World Development Report 1992: Development and the Environment*, Washington D.C. 1992.

→ accumulation, capitalism, Chartism, civil society, competition, division of labour, factory legislation, freedom/liberty, imperialism, landed property, liberalism, market, protectionism, simple circulation, state, state activity, trade, unequal development, unequal exchange, war, world market, world money

→ Akkumulation, Arbeitsteilung, bürgerliche Gesellschaft, Chartismus, einfache Zirkulation, Fabrikgesetzgebung, Freiheit, Grundeigentum, Handel, Imperialismus, Kapitalismus, Konkurrenz, Krieg, Liberalismus, Markt, Protektionismus, Staat, Staatstätigkeit, ungleiche Entwicklung, ungleicher Tausch, Weltgeld, Weltmarkt

CHAPTER 18

Gender

A: ǧins. – F: sexe. – G: Geschlecht. – R: pol, gender. – S: sexo, género. – C: xìngbié 性别

1. G is located at the contested boundary between the natural and the social, at the tension point between domination and oppression. As a disputed theoretical term, the concept of G first arose in the context of the feminist movement after the Second World War. The modern feminist concept of G cannot be found in the writings of **Marx** and **Engels**, although their writings and other forms of analysis encompassed within the Marxist tradition, have provided crucial tools for, as well as barriers against, the later politicisation and theorisation of G. Despite important differences, all the modern feminist definitions of G have roots in Simone **de Beauvoir**'s claim that 'one is not born [...] a woman' (1953, 273), and in the post Second World War period, social conditions enabled women to be figured as a collective historical subject-in-process. G is a concept developed to contest the naturalisation of sexual difference in multiple arenas of struggle. Feminist theory and practice around G seek to explain and change historical systems of sexual difference, whereby 'men' and 'women' are socially constituted and positioned in hierarchical and antagonistic series of relations. Feminist theories agree that any coherent subject is a fantasy, and that personal and collective identity is precariously and constantly socially reconstituted (**Coward** 1983, 265). These disputes over the actors, memories, and terms of expression of how G gets reconstituted is at the heart of feminist sex/G-politics.

1. Traditional Marxist approaches did not generate a political concept of G for two major reasons: first, women, as well as "tribal" people, were relegated to the border between the natural and social in the seminal writings of **Marx** and **Engels**, such that their efforts to account for the subordinate position of women were undercut by women's exclusion from society because of the natural sexual division of labour, grounded in an impermeable natural heterosexual way of thinking. Second, **Marx** and **Engels** theorised the economic property relation to be the fundamental reason for the oppression of women in marriage, such that women's subordination could be examined in terms of the capitalist class relations, but not in terms of a specific sexual politics between men and women. This argument can be traced back to Engels's *Origins* (1884).

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_019
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

GI is the major locus for **Marx** and **Engels**'s naturalisation of the sexual division of labour. In it, they formed their assumption of a pre-social division of labour in the sex act (heterosexual intercourse), its supposed natural corollaries in the reproductive activities of men and women in the family, and the consequential inability to place women in relation to men unambiguously on the side of history and fully in the realm of the social. In *Ms 44*, **Marx** refers to the relation of man and woman as the 'most natural relation of human being to human being' (MECW 3/296 [MEW 40/535]). This assumption persists in volume one of *C I* (MECW 35/356 [MEW 23/372]). **Engels** almost formed a basis for theorising the specific oppressions of women in his brief assertion that a fully materialist analysis of the production and reproduction of immediate life reveals a twofold character: the production of the means of existence and 'the production of human beings themselves' (*Origins*, MECW 26/132 [MEW 21/28]). An exploration of this latter character formed the starting point for many Euro-American Marxist-feminists in their theories surrounding the sex/G division of labour.

2. The post-1960s Western feminists' political rearticulating of G must grapple with the construction of meanings and technologies of sex and G, which were particularly normalised in the US in the liberal, interventionist-therapeutic, empiricist, and functionalist life sciences, including psychology, psychoanalysis, medicine, biology, and sociology. G was located firmly as an individualist problem within the broad 'incitement to discourse' (**Foucault** 1978) on sexuality characteristic of bourgeois, male-dominant, and racist society. In the 1950s and 60s, other movements ushered in new concepts and technologies related to "G identity": an instinctualist reading of **Freud**; the focus on sexual somatic and psychopathology by the great 19th-cent. sexologists and their followers; the ongoing development of biochemical and physiological endocrinology from the 1920s; the psychobiology of sexual differences growing out of comparative psychology; proliferating hypotheses of hormonal, chromosomal, and neural sexual dimorphism converging in the 1950s; and the first G reassignment surgeries around 1960 (**Stoller** 1968; **Money**/**Ehrhardt** 1972; **Linden** 1981).

Second-wave feminists criticised the binary logic of the nature/culture dualism early on, but these efforts were hesitant to extend their criticism fully to the derivative sex/G distinction. That distinction was too useful in combating the pervasive biological determinisms constantly deployed against feminists in urgent 'sexual differences' political struggles in schools, publishing houses, clinics, and so on. The ongoing tactical utility of the sex/G distinction in life and social sciences has had dire consequences for much feminist theory, tying it to a liberal and functionalist paradigm despite repeated efforts to transcend those

limits in a fully politicised and historicised concept of G (cf. **Thorne**/**Henley** 1975; **Kessler**/**McKenna** 1978; **Sayers** 1982; **Hubbard**/**Henifin**/**Fried** 1982; **Bleier** 1984 and 1986; **Fausto-Sterling** 1985; **West**/**Zimmermann** 1987; **Morawski** 1987).

3. Another stream of feminist sex/G theory and politics came through appropriations of **Marx**, **Freud** read through **Lacan**, and structuralism from **Lévi-Strauss**. Termed the 'sex/G system', this new influential formulation was introduced by Gayle **Rubin** (1975), whose paper appeared in the first anthology of socialist/Marxist feminist anthropology in the United States. Rubin examined the 'domestication of women', in which people of the female sex were the raw materials for the social production of women; these phenomena emerged from civil culture where women were exchanged in systems organised around kinship, which men controlled. She defined the sex/G system as the system of social relations that transformed biological sexuality into products of human activity, and in so doing, historically specific sexual needs are met. Rubin viewed the sexual division of labour and the psychological construction of desire (especially the oedipal formation) as the foundations of a system of production of human beings, where men were vested with unilateral rights over women. In order to survive materially in a system where men and women cannot perform the other's work and to satisfy deep structures of desire in the sex/G system in which men exchange women, heterosexuality is obligatory. Obligatory heterosexuality is therefore central to the oppression of women.

Rubin's sex/G system has been frequently used and criticised. In an article that was at the centre of much Euro-American Marxist and socialist-feminist debate, Heidi **Hartmann** (1979/1981) insisted that patriarchy was not simply an ideology, but a material system that could be defined 'as a set of social relations between men, which have a material base, and which, though hierarchical, establish or create interdependence and solidarity among men that enable them to dominate women' (14). Hartmann's application of **Rubin**'s concept of the sex/G system called for an understanding of the mode of production of human beings in patriarchal social relations through the male control of women's labour power (cf. MECW 5/46 [MEW 3/32]).

In the debate that **Hartmann**'s thesis elicited, Iris **Young** (1981) criticised the 'dual systems' approach to capital and patriarchy, which were then allied in the oppressions of class and G. Note how race, including an interrogation of white racial positioning, remained an unexplored system in these formulations. Young argued that 'patriarchal relations are internally related to production relations as a whole' (1981, 49), such that a focus on the G division of labour could reveal the dynamics of a single system of oppression. In addition to waged labour, the G division of labour also included the excluded and not

previously historicised labour categories in **Marx** and **Engels**, that is, bearing and rearing children, caring for the sick, cooking, housework, and sex-work like prostitution, in order to bring G and women's specific situation to the centre of historical materialist analysis. In this theory, since the G division of labour was also its first division, an account must be given to explain how a classed society emerged out of changes in this gendered division. Such an analysis does not posit that all women have a common, unified situation, but it makes the historically differentiated positions of women central; paid and unpaid labour in capitalist patriarchy became the paradigmatic issue in Marxist-feminism.

In exploring the epistemological consequences of a feminist historical materialism, Nancy **Hartsock** (1983) also concentrated on the categories that Marxism had been unable to historicise: (1) women's sensuous labour in the making of human beings through child-bearing and raising; and (2) women's nurturing and maintenance labour of all kinds. But Hartsock rejected the terminology of the *G* division of labour in favour of the *sexual* division of labour, in order to emphasise the bodily dimensions of women's activity. Hartsock was also critical of **Rubin**'s formulation of the sex/G system because it emphasised the exchange system of kinship at the expense of a materialist analysis of the labour process that grounded women's potential construction of a revolutionary standpoint (cf. D. **Smith** 1974; **Flax** 1983; **Rose** 1983, 1986; **Harding** 1983).

Sandra **Harding** (1986) stressed three variously interrelated elements of G in her approach to the sex/G system: G is (1) a fundamental category through which meaning is ascribed to everything, (2) a way of organising social relations, and (3) a structure of personal identity. Disaggregating these three elements has been part of coming to an understanding of the complexity and problematic value of politics based on G identities. Using the sex/G system to explore post-Second World War politics of sexual identity in gay movements, Jeffrey **Escoffier** (1985) argued for a need to theorise the emergence and limitations of new forms of political subjectivity, in order to develop a committed, positioned politics without metaphysical classifications of identity. **Haraway**'s (1985) 'A Cyborg Manifesto' developed similar arguments – critical against the sex/G systems that were associated with the colonial nature/culture ideology – in order to explore Marxist-feminist politics addressed towards women's positionings in multi-national science and technology-mediated social, cultural, and technical systems.

In another theoretical development indebted to Marxism that is critical of both it and of the language surrounding G, Catherine **MacKinnon** (1982, 515) argued that 'Sexuality is to feminism what work is to Marxism: that which is most one's own, yet most taken away [...] Sexuality is that social process which creates, organizes, expresses, and directs desire, creating the social beings we

know as women and men, as their relations create society [...] As the organized expropriation of the work of some for the benefit of others defines a class – workers – the organized expropriation of the sexuality of some for the use of others defines the sex, woman'. MacKinnon's position has been central to controversial approaches to political action in much of the US movement against pornography, defined as violence against women. Women are not simply alienated from the product of their labour; in so far as they exist as 'women', that is to say, sex objects, they are not even potentially historical subjects.

In an analysis of the G of violence sympathetic to **MacKinnon**'s, but drawing on different theoretical and political resources, Teresa **de Lauretis**'s (1984, 1985) approaches to representation led her to view G as the unexamined tragic flaw of modern and postmodern theories of culture, whose faultline is the heterosexual contract. De Lauretis defined G as the social construction of 'woman' and 'man' and the semiotic production of subjectivity; G has to do with 'the history, practices, and imbrication of meaning and experience'; that is, with the 'mutually constitutive effects in semiosis of the outer world of social reality with the inner world of subjectivity' (1984, 158–86). De Lauretis drew on Charles **Peirce**'s theories of semiosis to develop an approach to 'experience', one of the most problematic notions in modern feminism, that takes account both of experience's intimate embodiment and its mediation through signifying practices.

Offering a very different theory of consciousness and the production of meanings from **MacKinnon** or **de Lauretis**, Nancy **Hartsock**'s (1983) exploration of the sexual division of labour drew on anglophone versions of psychoanalysis that were particularly important in US feminist theory, that is, object relations theory as developed especially by Nancy **Chodorow** (1978). Without adopting **Rubin**'s Lacanian theories of always fragmentary sexed subjectivity, **Chodorow** adopted the concept of the sex/G system in her study of the social organisation of parenting, which produced women more capable of non-hostile relationality than men, but which also perpetuated the subordinate position of women through their production as people who are structured for mothering in patriarchy. Preferring an object relations psychoanalysis over a Lacanian version is related to adjacent concepts like 'G identity', with its empirical social science web of meanings, over 'acquisition of positions of sexed subjectivity', with this concept's immersion in Continental cultural/textual theory. Although criticised as an essentialising of woman-as-relational, Chodorow's feminist object relations theory has been immensely influential, having been adapted to explore a wide range of social phenomena, from feminine morality (**Gilligan** 1982) to systematic epistemological, psychic and organisational masculine dominance of natural science (**Keller** 1985).

Chodorow's early work was developed in the context of a related series of sociological and anthropological papers theorising a key role for the public/private division in the subordination of women (**Rosaldo**/**Lamphere** 1974). In that collection, **Rosaldo** argued the universal salience of the limitation of women to the domestic realm, while power was vested in the space men inhabit, called public. Sherry **Ortner** connected that approach to her structuralist analysis of the proposition that women are to nature as men are to culture. Two strategic collections of essays drew the attention of Euro-American feminist theory to the sex/G system (**Reiter** 1975) and the related binaries of nature/culture and public/private. Later theories about the social position of women were both strongly influenced and increasingly critical of the universalising effects of these analytical tools (**MacCormack**/**Strathern** 1980; **Rosaldo** 1980; **Ortner**/**Whitehead** 1981; **Rubin** 1984).

The universalising power of the sex/G system and the analytical split between public and private were also sharply criticised politically, especially by women of colour, as part of the ethnocentric and imperialising tendencies of European and Euro-American feminisms. The category of G obscured or subordinated all the other "others". Efforts to use Western or 'white' concepts of G to characterise a "Third World Woman" often resulted in reproducing orientalist, racist, and colonialist discourse (**Mohanty** 1984; **Amos** et al. 1984). Furthermore, US "women of colour", itself a complex and contested political construction of sexed identities, produced critical theory about the production of systems of hierarchical differences, in which race, nationality, sex, and class were intertwined, both in the 19th and early 20th cent. and from the earliest days of the women's movements that emerged from the 1960s civil rights and anti-war movements (**Ware** 1970; **Bethel**/**Smith** 1979; **Smith** 1983; **Combahee River Collective** 1977; **Moraga**/**Anzaldúa** 1981; **Joseph**/**Lewis** 1981; **hooks** 1981, 1984; **Lorde** 1982, 1984; **Davis** 1982; **Hull**/**Scott**/**Smith** 1982; **Walker** 1983; **Moraga** 1983; **Christian** 1985; **Giddings** 1985; **Sandoval** 1991). These theories of the social positioning of women ground and organise 'generic' feminist theory, in which concepts like 'difference' (**Lorde**), 'oppositional consciousness' (**Sandoval**), 'womanist' (**Walker**), 'Third World feminism' (**Moraga**), and 'sex-political classes' (**Sofoulis** 1987) structure the field of feminist discourse, as it decodes what counts as a 'woman' within as well as outside 'feminism' in heterogeneous as well as entangled world systems of domination.

In the early 1980s, *Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press* was established in New York and began to publish the critical theoretical and other writings of radical women of colour. This development must be seen in the context of international publishing in many genres by women writing into consciousness the

stories of their constructions, and thereby destabilising the canons of Western feminism, as well as those of many other discourses. The race-hierarchical system of relations obscures the publications by women of colour because of their origin, language, genre – in short, 'marginality', 'alterity', and 'difference' as seen from the 'unmarked' positions of hegemonic and imperialising ('white') theory. But 'alterity' and 'difference' are precisely what 'G' is about, a fact that constitutes feminism as a politics defined by its fields of contestation and repeated refusals of master narratives.

4. Although not mutually exclusive, the language of 'G' in Euro-American feminist discourse usually is the language of 'sexed subject position' and 'sexual difference' in European writing. (For British Marxist feminism on the 'sexed subject in patriarchy', see **Mitchell** 1971; **Kuhn/Wolpe** 1978; **Marxist-Feminist Literature Collective** 1978; **Brown/Adams** 1979; the journal *m/f*; **Barrett** 1980/2014. For German socialist-feminist positions on sexualisation, see **Haug** 1980, 1982, 1999; et al. 1987).

Several streams of European feminisms (some disavowing the label) were born after the events of May '68. The shift can be linked to Simone de **Beauvoir**'s formulations, especially work by Monique **Wittig**, Monique **Plaza**, Colette **Guillaumin**, and Christine **Delphy**, published in *Quéstions Feministes*, *Nouvelles Quéstions Feministes*, and *Feminist Issues*, and the movement associated complexly with the group **Psychanalyse et Politique** and/or with Julia **Kristeva**, Luce **Irigaray**, Sarah **Kofman**, and Hélène **Cixous** have been particularly influential in international feminist development on issues of sexual difference. (For introductory summaries, see **Marks/de Courtivron** 1980; **Moi** 1985; **Duchen** 1986). These shifts in discourse deserve large, separate concentrations; but in the context of this entry two contributions to theories of 'G' from these writers, who are deeply at odds amongst themselves with precisely these issues, must be signalled. First, there are **Wittig**'s and **Delphy**'s arguments for a materialist feminism, which insist that the issue is 'domination', not 'difference'. Second, there are **Irigaray**'s, **Kristeva**'s, and **Cixous**'s various ways (intertextually positioned in relation to **Derrida**, **Lacan**, and others) of insisting that the subject, which is perhaps best approached through writing and textuality, is always in process, always disrupted, that the idea of woman remains finally unclosed and multiple.

Donna Haraway

Bibliography

V. **Amos**, G. **Lewis**, A. **Mama**, P. **Parmar** (eds.), 'Many Voices, One Chant: Black Feminist Perspectives', *Feminist Review*, vol. 17, 1984.

M. **Barrett**, *Women's Oppression Today*, London 2014.

S. **de Beauvoir**, *The Second Sex*, London 1953.

L. **Bethel**, B. **Smith** (eds.), *Conditions: Five: The Black Women's Issue*, Brooklyn 1979.

R. **Bleier**, *Science and Gender*, New York 1984.

R. **Bleier** (ed.), *Feminist Approaches to Science*, New York 1986.

B. **Brown**, P. **Adams**, 'The Feminine Body and Feminist Politics', *m/f*, vol. 3, 1979, no. 1, 35–57.

N. **Chodorow**, *The Reproduction of Mothering*, Los Angeles 1985.

B. **Christian**, *Black Feminist Criticism*, New York 1985.

Combahee River Collective, 'The Combahee River Collective Statement' (1977), K.-Y. Taylor (ed.), *How We Get Free: Black Feminism and the Combahee River Collective*, Chicago 2017.

R. **Coward**, *Patriarchal Precedents: Sexuality and Social Relations*, London 1983.

A. **Davis**, *Women, Race, and Class*, London 1982.

T. **De Lauretis**, *Alice Doesn't*, Bloomington 1984.

T. **De Lauretis**, 'The Violence of Rhetoric: Considerations on Representation and Gender', *Semiotica*, vol. 54, 1985, no. 1–2, 11–31.

C. **Duchen**, *Feminism in France from May '68 to Mitterrand*, London 1986.

J. **Escoffier**, 'Sexual Revolution and the Politics of Gay Identity', *Socialist Review*, vol. 15, 1985, no. 81/82, 119–54.

A. **Fausto-Sterling**, *Myths of Gender: Biological Theories about Women and Men*, New York 1985.

J. **Flax**, 'Political Philosophy and the Patriarchal Unconscious: A Psychoanalytic Perspective on Epistemology and Metaphysics', Harding/Hintikka 1983, 245–82.

M. **Foucault**, *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1: *An Introduction*, New York 1978.

P. **Giddings**, *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America*, Toronto 1985.

C. **Gilligan**, *In a Different Voice*, Cambridge 1982.

D. **Haraway**, 'A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the 1980s', *Socialist Review*, 1985, no. 80, 65–108.

S. **Harding**, 'Why has the Sex/Gender System become Visible Only Now?', S. Harding, M. Hintikka 1983, 311–24.

S. **Harding**, *The Science Question in Feminism*, Ithaca 1986.

S. **Harding**, M. **Hintikka** (eds.), *Discovering Reality: Feminist Perspectives on Epistemology, Metaphysics, Methodology, and Philosophy of Science*, Dordrecht 1983.

H. **Hartmann**, 'The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism' (1979), Sargent 1981, 1–41.

N. **Hartsock**, 'The Feminist Standpoint: Developing the Ground for a Specifically Feminist Historical Materialism', S. Harding, M. Hintikka 1983, 283–310.
N. **Hartsock**, *Money, Sex, and Power*, New York 1983.
F. **Haug** (ed.), *Frauenformen: Alltagsgeschichten und Entwurf einer Theorie weiblicher Sozialisation*, Berlin 1980.
F. **Haug**, 'Frauen und Theorie', *Das Argument*, vol. 24, 1982, no. 132, 168–73.
F. **Haug** et al., *Female Sexualization: A Collective Work of Memory* 1987.
F. **Haug**, *Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die Erinnerungsarbeit: The Duke Lectures*, Hamburg 1999.
b. **hooks**, *Ain't I a Woman*, Boston 1981.
b. **hooks**, *From Margin to Center*, Boston 1984.
R. **Hubbard**, M.S. **Henifin**, B. **Fried** (eds.), *Biological Woman – The Convenient Myth*, Cambridge 1982.
G. **Hull**, P.B. **Scott**, B. **Smith** (eds.), *All the Women Are White, All the Men Are Black, But Some of Us Are Brave*, New York 1982.
G. **Joseph**, J. **Lewis**, *Common Differences*, New York 1981.
E.F. **Keller**, *Reflections on Gender and Science*, New Haven 1985.
S. **Kessler**, W. **Mckenna**, *Gender: An Ethnomethodological Approach*, Chicago 1978.
A. **Kuhn**, A. **Wolpe** (eds.), *Feminism and Materialism*, London 1978.
J. **Lacan**, 'The Signification of the Phallus', *Écrits*, transl. B. Fink, New York 2008, 685–95.
R.R. **Linden**, *The Social Construction of Gender: A Methodological Analysis of the Gender Identity Paradigm*, Santa Cruz 1981.
A. **Lorde**, *Zami*, New York 1982.
A. **Lorde**, *Sister Outsider*, New York 1984.
C. **MacCormack**, M. **Strathern** (eds.), *Nature, Culture, Gender*, Cambridge 1980.
C. **MacKinnon**, 'Feminism, Marxism, Method, and the State: An Agenda for Theory', *Signs*, vol. 7, 1982, no. 3, 515–44.
E. **Marks**, I. **de Courtivron** (eds.), *New French Feminisms*, Amherst 1980.
Marxist-Feminist Literature Collective, 'Women's Writing', *Ideology and Consciousness*, vol. 1, 1978, no. 3, 27–48.
J. **Mitchell**, *Women's Estate*, New York 1971.
C.T. **Mohanty**, 'Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourse', *boundary 2*, vol. 12, 1984, no. 3, 333–58.
T. **Moi**, *Sexual/Textual Politics*, New York 1985.
J. **Money**, A. **Ehrhardt**, *Man and Woman, Boy and Girl*, New York 1972.
C. **Moraga**, *Loving in the War Years: lo que nunca pasó por sus labios*, Boston 1983.
C. **Moraga**, G. **Anzaldúa** (eds.), *This Bridge Called My Back*, Watertown 1981.
J.G. **Morawski**, 'The Troubled Quest for Masculinity, Femininity, and Androgyny', *Sex and Gender: Review of Personality and Social Psychology*, vol. 7, 1987, 44–69.

C. **Mouffe**, 'The Sex/Gender System and the Discursive Construction of Women's Subordination', *Rethinking Ideology*, AS 84, Berlin/W 1983, 139–43.
M. **O'Brien**, *The Politics of Reproduction*, New York 1981.
S. **Ortner**, 'Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?', M. Rosaldo, L. Lamphere 1974, 67–88.
S. **Ortner**, H. **Whitehead** (eds.), *Sexual Meanings: The Cultural Construction of Gender and Sexuality*, Cambridge 1981.
R.R. **Reiter** (ed.), *Toward an Anthropology of Women*, New York 1975.
M. **Rosaldo**, 'The Use and Abuse of Anthropology: Reflections on Feminism and Cross-cultural Understanding', *Signs*, vol. 5, 1980, no. 3, 389–417.
M. **Rosaldo**, L. **Lamphere** (eds.), *Woman, Culture, and Society*, Palo Alto 1974.
H. **Rose**, 'Hand, Brain, and Heart: Towards a Feminist Epistemology of the Natural Sciences', *Signs*, vol. 9, 1983, no. 1, 73–90.
H. **Rose**, 'Women's Work: Women's Knowledge', J. Mitchell, A. Oakley (eds.), *What Is Feminism?*, New York 1986, 161–83.
G. **Rubin**, 'The Traffic in Women: Notes on the Political Economy of Sex', Reiter 1975, 157–210.
G. **Rubin**, 'Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality', C. Vance (ed.), *Pleasure and Danger*, London 1984, 267–319.
C. **Sandoval**, 'US Third World Feminism: The Theory and Method of Oppositional Consciousness in the Postmodern World', *Genders*, vol. 10, 1991, no. 1, 1–24.
L. **Sargent** (ed.), *Women and Revolution*, Boston 1981.
J. **Sayers**, *Biological Politics: Feminist and Anti-Feminist Perspectives*, London 1982.
B. **Smith** (ed.), *Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology*, New York 1983.
D. **Smith**, 'Women's Perspective as a Radical Critique of Sociology', *Sociological Inquiry*, vol. 44, 1974, no. 1, 7–13.
R. **Stoller**, *Sex and Gender*, 2 vols., New York, 1968 and 1976.
B. **Thorne**, N.H. **Henley** (eds.), *Language and Sex: Difference and Dominance*, Rowley (MA) 1975.
A. **Walker**, *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens*, New York 1983.
C. **Ware**, *Woman Power*, New York 1970.
C. **West**, D.H. **Zimmerman**, 'Doing Gender', *Gender and Society*, vol. 1, 1987, no. 2, 125–51.
M. **Wittig**, 'One Is Not Born a Woman', *Feminist Issues*, vol. 1, 1981, no. 2, 47–54.
I. **Young**, 'Beyond the Unhappy Marriage: A Critique of the Dual Systems Theory', Sargent 1981, 44–69.

→ classes, compulsory heterosexuality, critique of science, domestic-labour debate, domination, exchange, family work/domestic labour/housework,

Freudo-Marxism, housewife, homosexuality, kinship, mode of production, mothers, opposition, oppression, Orientalism, Parisian May, patriarchy, precapitalist modes of production, private/public, production relations, reproductive labour, reproductive relations, science, semiotics, sexuality, signs, women's work, women's movement, work

→ Arbeit, Familienarbeit/Hausarbeit, Frauenarbeit, Frauenbewegung, Freudomarxismus, Gegensatz, Hausarbeitsdebatte, Hausfrau, Herrschaft, Heteronormativität, Homosexualität, Klassenanalyse, Materialismus (neuer feministischer), Mütter, Orientalismus, Pariser Mai, Patriarchat, privat/öffentlich, Produktionsverhältnisse, Produktionsweise, Reproduktionsarbeit, Reproduktionsverhältnisse, Semiotik, Sexualität, Tausch, Unterdrückung, Verwandtschaft, vorkapitalistische Produktionsweisen, Wissenschaft, Wissenschaftskritik, Zeichen, Zwangsheterosexualität

11. Paradigmatically for (de)constructivist conceptions, Ulrike **Teubner** and Angelika **Wetterer** argue 'that concerning the G identity of persons and the G binary as a principle of classification and differentiation, we are not dealing with a given of nature but with the result of social construction processes' (1999, 12 et sq.). What exactly the 'social construction' of G means differs according to particular theories, not least because the construction of G gets examined within different social arenas – sometimes the focus is more on social interactions, sometimes more on structural or institutional processes, and sometimes more on the discursive constitution of G in literary texts or normative and mainstream discourses. Overall, however, this insight immensely expands the questions' scope such that all aspects relating to society (social situations, social structures, institutions, architecture, forms of knowledge, subjectivity, etc.) now can be considered as (possible) moments of social construction and organisation of G, as gendered and gendering elements related to the 'arrangement between the sexes' (**Goffman** 1977). The shift in women's studies to G studies is closely connected to this in almost all of these positions. For instance, conventional women's studies focused on demonstrating the various unperceived facets of women's life and actions as well as their discrimination in different areas of society. The starting point of G studies, however, is questioning G as such. The problems can now be attributed to the movement's first steps, so to speak. That is, why must individuals become "women" and "men" at all, and what does it mean that so many societies centrally organise themselves around G? What still needs to be explained is how the symbolic order of the heterosexual G binary is (re)produced in various social processes and what consequences this has for social organisation, language,

architecture, science, thought, and especially for individuals (including their emotional, psychological, cognitive and physical development).

1. Most of those who are invested in reconstructing the social construction of G are simultaneously interested in deconstructing it as a hegemonic principle of social organisation and an individual mode of existence. Utopian aspirations for social relations beyond G prescribe either the obsolescence of the category as such (cf. **Gildemeister/Wetterer** 1992) or the multiplication of Gs, which leads to an undermining of G as a normative, stratifying, and disciplinary social category (**Butler** 1990; **Maihofer** 1995). This theoretical shift, however, should not be misunderstood as a replacement for traditional women's studies. Rather, it marks a specific development of the insight associated with women's studies into the fundamental significance of G for the knowledge of society. The resulting theoretical paradigm shift is thus reinforced without necessarily losing the driving critique of patriarchy. On the contrary, G as such is now criticised as a principle of social domination. G studies aims beyond the patriarchal form of G relations and towards the existence of G relations in it of themselves.

All (de)constructivist approaches share a particular position that arose from feminist theories from the 1970s, namely, problematising the separation of sex and G (cf. **Lerner** 1986; for a critical approach, see **Gildemeister/Wetterer** 1992, 205 et sqq.; **Nicholson** 1994). As Barbara **Duden** writes, in drawing this boundary 'the body was expelled from history, and the problem of how it has been perceived fell outside the sphere of social history' (1991, vi). Historical research has shown that not only does the understanding and perception of the supposedly natural, sexed body, its anatomy and morphology, vary historically, but also the way it is experienced, felt and practiced. These changes are closely related to specific developments in G relations (**Honegger** 1991; **Duden** 1991). As **Laqueur** (1992) summarises, biological sex belongs just as much to the field of culture and meaning as does social G. For G studies, this leads to an extension of the subject area: the biologically sexed body itself now needs to be explained. Its particular understanding as well as the development of "female" and "male" bodily practices, feelings and ideas thus become an integral part of G theory. In this context, it is no longer appropriate to speak of "G research" or "G studies", since the English term "G" implies an opposition of the biological (sex) and the social (G). Strictly speaking, this makes an adequate linguistic representation of theoretical development impossible, and leads to frequent misunderstandings. A conceptual alternative is still lacking.

Another foundation for many (de)constructivist approaches, formulated in particular by black women and other women of colour, lies in a critique of the discourse of "the" woman as such. This way of speaking reveals an unaccept-

able generalisation of the way of life of Western, bourgeois, white heterosexual middle-class women as hegemonic norm for all women (**Spelman** 1988). One consequence of this critique is the insight that G cannot be analysed independently of other aspects such as "ethnicity", "class", or "sexual orientation". It is not enough to conceive the relation between such aspects as additive (114 et sqq.), as Spelman rightly points out, but rather as one of entanglement, combination, or interweaving (**hooks** 1986; **Meulenbelt** 1993; **Rommelspacher** 1995). Furthermore, the different moments change their significance depending on the context. Indeed, a concrete individual always expresses a unique, inimitable combination. This does not necessarily imply an endless series of isolated individuals without any commonalities or objective generalisability, although such a danger exists (**Spelman** 1988, 133 et sqq.). Phenomenologically, the increasing "individualisation" and "pluralisation" of ways of life in Western societies may at first suggest such an idea. But seen more closely, individual processes of development – however heterogeneous, "class-specific", "ethnically", or "sexually" differentiated and modified – still take place within the framework of bourgeois, patriarchal power relations which lie under the dominance of its disciplinary and normalising mechanisms. This alone gives rise to a multitude of structural similarities between individuals. Thus, in Western societies, all individuals are still "forced" to form an identity, to become a subject, to develop into a "man" or "woman", however differentiated, conventional, or subversive they may be.

2. Central to (de)constructivist theories of G is the notion of 'doing G'. The ethnomethodological studies by Harold **Garfinkel** (1967) are particularly pioneering in this respect. Here, the social construction of G identity becomes visible as a multiplicity of everyday interactions, in which the G of a person is produced by oneself and others (cf. **Lindemann** 1993; **Hirschauer** 1993). Erving **Goffman**'s theses (1977) are even more significant. He begins with the following question: how is it possible that minimal biological differences in sex can be regarded by most people as an explanation for the significant social inequalities between Gs? The plausibility of this view requires a 'vast, integrated body of social beliefs and practices' (302). Sex functions 'at the base of a fundamental code in accordance with which social interactions and social structures are built up, a code which also establishes the conceptions individuals have concerning their fundamental human nature' (301). Individuals learn from an early age to 'present' their own 'G' as convincingly as possible and to 'identify' the 'G identity' of others as promptly and confidently as possible. Social situations in turn are organised in such a way that they provide individuals with the necessary means to do so, even suggesting to them appropriate G behaviour. In this

way, the belief in the naturalness of sex-differences is constantly generated and confirmed anew. Goffman calls this circularity of social interactions 'institutional reflexivity' (313 et sqq.). As examples, he refers to the institutionalised sexual separation of toilets in Western societies, the G-specific segregation of the labour market, and the usual method of partner selection, which almost always leads to the same pair constellations: larger, older men and smaller, younger women. With this choice, women and men create the optimal basis for effectively playing out their supposedly different 'natures' against each other (321). Thus, the structure of social interactions not only guarantees a constant construction of sexual difference, but also its naturalisation, precisely in the belief that its basis lies in human nature. In short, according to Goffman, G, not religion, is the 'opiate of the masses' (315).

Similarly, Candace **West** and Don H. **Zimmerman** explicitly define G as 'doing G': 'Doing G involves a complex of socially guided perceptual, interactional, and micropolitical activities that cast particular pursuits as expression of masculine and feminine "natures"' (1991, 14). With 'natures', they not only reject natural, biological sexual differences as a basis for individual action and social organisation, but they also reject their socialised appropriation. G is thus now conceived in an even more fundamentally anti-essentialist way, that is, exclusively as something one 'does' and not simply 'is' (27). This shifts the theoretical and empirical attention away from the view of G as an expression of something inner, a male or female essence, and towards an idea of G as an ever-emerging effect of social interactions: 'Rather than as a property of individuals, we conceive of G as an emergent feature of social situations' (ibid.). There is a great deal of research along these lines that shows how G or G differences are constructed in everyday situations, in communications, in the family, in the workplace (**Wetterer** 1995; **Hirschauer** 1993; **Lorber** 1994; **Connell** 1995). Despite such productivity, however, this shift also results in a certain theoretical narrowing. In short, there is a tendency to concentrate almost exclusively on the detailed analysis of the social construction process of G. G is thus no longer simply conceived as a social practice, but as an action evoked again and again, through and in social situations. The "subject" as some kind of "starting point of action" disappears from view.

R.W. **Connell** (1995) also opposes the idea of G as fixed facts about a person (20). Thinking of G in terms of 'personality' or 'character' (72) is too rigid, unchangeable (38). In contrast, Connell stresses the processual nature of G in 'configurations of G practice' (72). Accordingly, G is a construct of gendered practices assigned to a person or that one assigns to oneself as an expression of one's sex. In other words, there is no perpetrator behind the deed, only the deed or doing of G generated in and by a social situation.

The problem with this approach, however, does not lie in abandoning the metaphysical idea of the "subject" as a given, inner essence of the individual. Rather, from the thesis that there is no perpetrator before the act (in the causal and temporal sense), it does not necessarily follow that there is also no perpetrator *after* the act, i.e. a 'subject'/'G' as a result of social practices (cf. **Foucault** 1978 and 1985). Thus, the "compulsion" to develop a G identity as a "woman" or a "man" means that an individual must repeatedly assign themselves the many G-specific practices, ways of thinking, and feelings that social situations constantly demand of them as expressions of one's G identity. In the course of individual development, therefore, G identity "in" and "for" the individual gradually acquires a material reality as a specific relationship to oneself.

Judith **Lorber** sees her 'G as social institution' theory as a further development of the 'Doing G' approach (1994, 13 et sqq.). Her starting point, however, is deliberately located not 'in the individual or in interpersonal relations, although the construction and maintenance of G are manifest in personal identities and in social interaction' (1). In contrast, she conceives G first and foremost 'as an institution that establishes patterns of expectations for individuals, orders the social processes of everyday life, is built into the major social organizations of society, such as the economy, ideology, the family, and politics, and is also an entity in and of itself' (ibid.). Accordingly, G as a 'social institution' encompasses structural aspects such as the sexual division of labour and family relations as well as ideological or symbolic aspects such as norms, language, art, and personality traits such as patterns of how to 'feel and behave', and G identity (30). Despite this comprehensive account, a theoretical and empirical narrowing also occurs in her understanding of G. This can be seen in the primacy of the institution over the individual and practices. Instead of rejecting this opposition and considering all aspects of G as equally "starting and ending points", thus analysing their mutual conditionality, Lorber explicitly and repeatedly assumes that the social institution of G is the more important and consequential aspect (6 et sq.).

3. Judith **Butler** most radically problematises all aspects of the (de)constructivist understanding of G mentioned above. Her point of departure is the critique of the self-evident manner by which feminist theory and politics deploy the category of "woman" (1990, 1 et sqq.). In such accounts, it is predetermined that all women share something with each other in virtue of being women. Ultimately, this is only possible by appealing to a natural sex common to all women. Connected with this is the metaphysical idea of a substantially given subject, represented through its demands. Finally, this assumes a homogeneous identity of women. According to Butler, however, neither subject nor identity nor

the body can be self-evidently presupposed as conditions or entities. Rather, according to her discourse-theoretical perspective, they should be described as effects of discursive practices.

The concept of G thus ought to designate 'the very apparatus of production whereby the sexes themselves are established' (7). Consequently, it should also include the 'discursive/cultural means by which "sexed nature" or "a natural sex" is produced and established as "prediscursive", prior to culture, a politically neutral surface *on which* culture acts' (ibid.). This insight is important because only in this way can the constitutive link between G and heterosexuality be made visible in hegemonic G discourse. For 'casting the duality of sex in a prediscursive domain' effectively secures the inner stability and binary frame of the concept of sex (ibid.). Thus, according to **Butler**, G must also be understood explicitly as the 'effect of a regulatory practice that can be identified as compulsory heterosexuality' (18). This insistence on the connection between G and the heterosexual organisation of desire, which is constitutive for the current G order, is certainly another significant aspect of Butler's work (cf. **Hark** 1993; **Hennessy** 2000). For **Butler**, drag nicely symbolises the idea of G as a discursive effect. In the words of Esther **Newton**, an anthropologist she cites: drag 'at its most complex [...] is a double inversion that says, "appearance is an illusion". Drag says my "outside" appearance is feminine, but my essence "inside" [the body] is masculine. At the same time, it symbolizes the opposite inversion; my appearance "outside" [my body, my G] is masculine but my essence "inside" [myself] is feminine' (1990, 137). In the manifestation that the 'appearance is an illusion', the imaginary connection between G and the body becomes completely clear. The seemingly authentic, seemingly real, natural body itself becomes visible as an effect (146). Moreover, **Butler** argues that there is a social, not natural, compulsion inherent in contemporary heterosexual G discourse which demands the unification of various thoughts, feelings, forms of sexual desire and G practices into a G identity, as well as the identity/conformity of anatomical sex and G identity. Much of the brilliance and fascination with Butler's views lies in her insights into these complex identity compulsions, especially the unification of sex and G identity. The radicality by which she conceives G as an imaginary relation must also be noted.

4. While the discourses on the category of G exploded at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, a decade later this topic had become rather quiet. Two problems hindered its development. First, although the insight into the fundamental historicity and sociality of G has some proximity to a Marxist/materialist perspective, so far hardly any perspective on society as a whole has been taken up. Hence, a broader social-theoretical attempt towards a the-

ory of G relations and their possible development within the framework of social transformation is yet to be made. Second, the reduction of the social-theoretical perspective within (de)constructivist conceptions of G is reflected, as it were, in a reduction of the theory of the subject. Although the critique of essentialist conceptions of "subjectivity", "identity", and "body" is justified in many respects, it tends to ignore what actually happens "in" individuals, in their "soul", their "bodies" when they live in societies where they are made into "women" and "men" from the very first second of their existence. For G relations are not only constructed and reproduced in social institutions, interactions or discourses, but also "in" individuals (cf. **Haug** 1999). It is thus not only in social situations that individuals are constantly made into Gs, into "women" and "men"; in the course of their development, they also "exist" as such, e.g., in their relationship to themselves as this specific G identity or in these repeatedly carried out disambiguations and identifications with this concrete "woman" or this concrete "man" (**Maihofer** 1995). But in order to include these processes in theoretical reflection and empirical analysis, it is no longer possible to simply fall back on conventional notions of "subjectivity", "identity", and "body". The development of new concepts that do not reproduce the criticised essentialisms is one of the central tasks of G theory.

Andrea Maihofer
Both parts of the article translated by Jacob Blumenfeld

Bibliography

J. **Butler**, *Gender Trouble*, New York 1990.

R.W. **Connell**, *Masculinities*, Berkeley 1995.

B. **Duden**, *The Women Beneath the Skin*, Cambridge 1991.

M. **Foucault**, *History of Sexuality*, vol. 1, *An Introduction*, New York 1978, vol. 2, *The Use of Pleasure*, New York 1985.

H. **Garfinkel**, *Studies in Ethnomethodology*, New Jersey 1967.

R. **Gildemeister**, A. **Wetterer**, 'Wie Geschlechter gemacht werden', G.-A. Knapp, A. Wetterer (eds.), *Traditionen: Brüche*, Freiburg/Br 1992, 201–54.

E. **Goffman**, 'The Arrangement Between the Sexes', *Theory and Society*, vol. 4, 1977, no. 3, 301–31.

S. **Hark**, 'Queer Interventionen', *Feministische Studien*, vol. 11, 1993, no. 2, 103–9.

F. **Haug**, *Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die Erinnerungsarbeit*, Hamburg 1999.

R. **Hennessy**, *Profit and Pleasure: Sexual Identities in Late Capitalism*, New York 2000.

S. **Hirschauer**, *Die soziale Konstruktion der Transsexualität*, Frankfurt/M 1993.

C. **Honegger**, *Die Ordnung der Geschlechter: Die Wissenschaft vom Menschen und das Weib*, Frankfurt/M 1991.
b. **hooks**, 'Sisterhood: Political Solidarity between Women', *Feminist Review*, vol. 23, 1986, no. 1, 125–38.
T. **Laqueur**, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*, Cambridge 1992.
G. **Lerner**, *The Creation of Patriarchy*, New York 1986.
G. **Lindemann**, *Das paradoxe Geschlecht: Transsexualität im Spannungsfeld von Körper, Leib und Gefühl*, Frankfurt/M 1993.
J. **Lorber**, *Paradoxes of Gender*, Binghamton 1994.
J. **Lorber**, S.A. **Farrell** (eds.), *The Social Construction of Gender*, Newbury Park (CA) 1991.
A. **Maihofer**, *Geschlecht als Existenzweise: Macht, Moral, Recht und Geschlechterdifferenz*, Frankfurt/M 1995.
A. **Meulenbelt**, *Scheidelinien: Über Sexismus, Rassismus und Klassismus*, Hamburg 1993.
L. **Nicholson**, 'Interpreting Gender', *Signs*, vol. 20, 1994, no. 1, 79–105.
B. **Rommelspacher**, *Dominanzkultur: Texte zu Fremdheit und Macht*, Berlin 1995.
E. **Spelman**, *Inessential Woman: Problems of Exclusion in Feminist Thought*, Boston 1988.
U. **Teubner**, A. **Wetterer**, 'Soziale Konstruktion transparent gemacht: Eine Einleitung', J. Lorber, *Gender Paradoxien*, Opladen 1999, 9–29.
C. **West**, D.H. **Zimmerman**, 'Doing Gender', Lorber/Farrell 1991, 13–37.
A. **Wetterer** (ed.), *Die soziale Konstruktion von Geschlecht in Professionalisierungsprozessen*, Frankfurt/M 1995.

→ action, biologism, body, compulsory heterosexuality, construction, desire, discourse theory, domination, equal rights policy, eros, gender contract, gender democracy, gender egalitarian societies, gender mainstreaming, gender relations, homosexuality, identity, individual, language, love, marriage, masculinity, materialist feminism, meaning, patriarchy, queer theory, satisfaction, sexuality, socialisation, subject, subject-effect, women's movement, women's studies

→ Bedeutung, Befriedigung, Biologismus, Diskurstheorie, Ehe, Eros, Frauenbewegung, Frauenforschung, gender mainstreaming, Geschlechtervertrag, Geschlechterdemokratie, Geschlechterverhältnisse, geschlechtsegalitäre Gesellschaften, Gleichstellungspolitik, Handlung, Herrschaft, Homosexualität, Identität, Individuum, Konstruktion, Körper, Liebe, Lust, Männlichkeit, Materialismus (neuer feministischer), Patriarchat, Queer-Theorie, Sexualität, Sozialisation, Sprache, Subjekt, Subjekteffekt, Zwangsheterosexualität

CHAPTER 19

Geopolitics

A: ǧuġrāfiyā siyāsīya. – F: géopolitique. – G: Geopolitik. – R: geopolitika. – S: geopolítica. – C: dìyuán zhèngzhìxué 地缘政治学

The term "G" was formalised by Karl **Haushofer** (1869–1946) to argue in the late imperialist phase of European state rivalry that geographical space was the primary determining factor of the political. Since the 1970s, it has been used as a technical term in a "neutral", "non-specialised" way to designate 'power struggles over territories for the purpose of political control over space' (**Lacoste** 1993).

Transnationally, the conception of G consists of three elements: a concept of the state which treats it as a biological organism, a social-Darwinist view of inter-state relations defined as a struggle for *Lebensraum* [living space], and an effort to derive the political from natural-spatial determinants.

1. As set out in the *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* [*Journal for Geopolitics*], **Haushofer**'s "specifically German" theory of international politics combined (i) a reactionary critique of the liberal, "mechanistic" conceptions of the state and society, with recourse to the *völkisch* "ideas of 1914", and an organicist conception of the state; (ii) a visceral rejection of technology and industry, based on a lack of understanding of the capital relation; (iii) a corresponding positive revaluation of pre-industrial agriculture, mystified as "chthonic" and "organic"; (iv) a Malthusian emphasis on population growth; (v) a dualistic view of power determined by geographical position with a preference for land power over sea power, which would lead to the practical objective of founding a Eurasian power bloc under German leadership; (vi) the rejection of international law, as institutionalised in the League of Nations, in favour of a new *Großraumordnung* [Grand Spatial Order]; (vii) the combination and political radicalisation of these elements through Anglophobia and anti-Semitism. In the context of the capitalist interwar crisis, German G can best be understood as the ideology of a 'continental German imperialism' (**Diner** 1984, 2) and a theoretical riposte to Marxist theories of imperialism.

Between 1916 and 1944, the concept of G reaches its peak in terms of public influence; first during the revisionist intellectual struggles against the Versailles Treaties and, thereafter, as a key legitimation for Nazi-*Großraumpolitik*. The disastrous consequences of the Second World War led to the term being widely

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_020
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

discredited in the Federal Republic of Germany, even though the concept was not altogether taboo (**Grabowsky** 1960). Elements of the term were revived during the 1980s by conservative historians in what would be known as the *historians' dispute* [*Historikerstreit*] (1986) in a way Hans-Ulrich **Wehler** described as '"middle position" palaver' (1988, 224), seconded by Jürgen **Habermas** who referred to the term's public rehabilitation as 'geopolitical ballyhoo' (1987, 75). German unification, finally, led to a general discursive renaissance of the idiomatic vocabulary of G, even though the concept's historical genealogy has been largely sanitised or suppressed (**Diekmann** et al. 2000).

From the beginning of the Cold War onwards, geopolitical categories and ways of reasoning were developed further on the basis of contributions by German-Jewish émigrés – crystallising in the Anglo-American discourse of power-political "realism", which dates back to the critique of Isaiah **Bowman**'s Wilsonianism (**Strausz-Hupé** 1942; **Morgenthau** 1948; **Gray** 1988; **Kissinger** 1994). With the resurgence of classical realism (**Morgenthau** 1948) after the Second World War and its Cold-War-driven transformation into neo-realism (**Waltz** 1979) – which insists on a systemic logic of an international state of nature in which *Realpolitik*, security dilemma, and balance of power theory prevail – the realist tradition asserts itself as a hegemonic discourse of international politics to this very day (**Gray** 1988; **Kissinger** 1994; **Mearsheimer** 2001). In Latin countries, the *nouvelle géopolitique* (**Lacoste** 1993) is propagated with reference to the *géohistoire* of the Annales School (**Braudel** 1994), which finds its expression in the founding of journals in France (*Hérodote*) and Italy (*liMes – Rivista Italiana di Geopolitica*). Since the 1980s, *Critical G* (**Ashley** 1987; **Walker** 1993; **George** 1994; **Agnew**/**Corbridge** 1995; **Ó Tuathail** 1996; **Agnew** 1998), has attempted to understand G as a discursive phenomenon to trace the representation and construction of political spatial orders in a historical way. Geopolitical thinking has thus again become an integral part of the discourse of political science.

2. Elements of G can be traced back to the political philosophies of the physiocrats and bourgeois materialists. The political naturalism that is founded there can be divided into a biological-racial doctrine of human nature and a geographical-determinist doctrine (climate, soil, location, topography) of non-human nature. Both are crucial for determining a regionally specific form of political socialisation. Against the background of the foundation of the German Empire (1871) and the subsequent period of inter-imperialist rivalries, Friedrich **Ratzel** (1846–1911) first developed the critique of the universalistic notion of the state associated with the Enlightenment and liberalism (**Faber** 1982). **Ratzel**, a co-founder of the *Alldeutscher Verband* (Pan-German League),

fused the organicist conception of the state with the social-Darwinism of Ernst **Haeckel** (1843–1909) into 'the law of spatial expansion' (**Ratzel** 1882, 116 et sqq.). The struggle for survival in the plant and animal kingdom transforms into a collective struggle for space and resources amongst *Völker* [racially/culturally defined peoples]. This struggle for space revolves around expansion and selection, rather than specialisation. The notion of a mismatch between soil fertility and population growth (1897, 74 et sqq.), grounded in a precapitalist agrarian worldview, justifies state expansionist policies. The political space *Großraum* turns into *'Lebensraum'* (1901) and, therefore, into the "natural" objective of all state activity, with war being the natural mode of regulation. States are born, grow, and die in the struggle for space. Categories that mediate between the notions of soil, society, and state – such as labour, classes, and social interests – are largely ignored. Consequently, disagreements arise in the pre-war era between ethnocentric (Oscar **Peschel**, Robert **Sieger**) and geopolitical views of the goals and limits of foreign policy. While the former conception relies on political romanticism and **Herder**'s notion of nations as cultural-linguistic units [*Volksnation*], which advocates a congruence between ethnic expansion and state territoriality, the latter conception [*Staatsnation*] prioritises infinite territorial aggrandisement over ethnic-racial homogeneity (**Ratzel**, Alfred **Kirchhoff**). *Volksnation* and *Staatsnation* are, thus, not synonymous and constitute rival points of orientation (cf. **Faber** 1982, 394 et sqq.). This tension between "race" and "space" re-emerges later in discrepancies between the original programme of German G and Adolf **Hitler**'s *Rassenideologie* [racial ideology] (cf. **Bassin** 1987).

Contemporaneously and in partial competition with these developments in pre-war Germany, Alfred T. **Mahan**'s (1840–1914) anti-isolationist American navalism and the heartland-theory of the British geographer Halford **Mackinder** (1861–1947) grew in influence. Admiral **Mahan**'s 'aquatological' theory (1890; 1897) identifies the decisive factor in geopolitical power politics in the fleet-based domination of the sea, whereas **Mackinder** (1904) – at the time Director of the London School of Economics – insists on the superiority of territorial power in what he describes as the "post-Columbian", i.e. post-naval, age. Both conceptions express the transition from the cosmopolitan imperialism of free trade to the era of protectionist neo-mercantilism (**Semmel** 1960, 171 et sqq.). According to **Mackinder**'s "trizonal" world-view, a geostrategically immune inner-Eurasian heartland – the pivot of history – is enclosed by an inner crescent that stretches from the margins of Europe over the Near and Middle East on to India and China. This is, in turn, surrounded by an outer crescent, which comprises England, the Americas, Africa, Australia, Oceania, and Japan. Whilst control of the world's oceans had been the decisive factor

in the power constellations of the "Columbian" age (ca. 1500–1900), the contemporary global balance of power is decisively altered by the technological penetration of the *pivot area* (Central Asia, Russia) by a transcontinental network of railways. The future belonged to an alliance between Germany and Russia, which remained in its territorial heartland unassailable to naval powers. Only a grand coalition of naval powers against the territorial powers stood in the way of Eurasian world domination (1904, 436). 'Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland: Who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island: Who commands the World-Island commands the World' (1919, 150). The horizon of this vision is "world domination".

It is doubtful, however, whether **Mackinder** and **Mahan** form part of an 'Anglo-Saxon democratic' tradition of G (**Sprengel** 1996, 25). Both emphasise the 'struggle for existence', both subscribe to the organicist view of the state. **Mackinder** pleads for a social-imperialist policy of race and education and calls for the subordination of the people to the imperatives of the militarised imperialist commercial state (1919; cf. **Semmel** 1960, 174 et sqq.). His dichotomies – land/sea, tellurian/aquatological, Leviathan/Behemoth – are later adopted by Carl **Schmitt** (1950).

3. As a practice-oriented theory of space, G matures from 1933 onwards into the official German science of the state [*Staatswissenschaft*]. Its direct precursor is the Swedish constitutional lawyer Rudolf **Kjellén** (1864–1922) who was the first to use the term G. In *Der Staat als Lebensform* (*The State as an Organism*, 1916), Kjellén contrasts the norm-oriented legal positivism (**Bluntschli**, **Jellinek**) with a supposedly "empirical viewpoint" of the state. Here, G is defined as 'a view of the state as geographic organism' or as a 'phenomenon in space [*Erscheinung im Raume*]' (**Kjellén** 1916/1924, 45). In this conception, G constitutes one of five components of politics in general. Driven by the conception of the state defined primarily as a power-political actor, G turns into an auxiliary science of politics in the international struggle for survival. Laws of nature provide its basis of legitimacy. 'Energetic [*lebenskräftige*] states, whose space is limited, are compelled by the same categorical-political imperative to expand their space through colonisation, merger, or conquest of various kinds' (75). During the period of transition to "world politics" in the 'planetary age' (1918a), flanked by the US and the SU as the G super-powers, there is a broad reception of Kjellén's doctrine. The founding of the Geopolitisches Seminar at the Deutsche Hochschule für Politik (1924), the launch of the widely circulating *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* (1924), published by the NSDAP member Kurt **Vowinckel**, and the creation of the 'Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Geopolitik [Working Group on G]' (1932) mark the stages of this rise (**Sprengel** 1996, 33). **Haushofer**,

appointed professor for geography at the University of Munich (1921–39), president of the Deutsche Akademie (1934–7) and a close confidant of Rudolf **Hess**, defines G as 'the science of political forms of life within living space, conceived in its deep relation to soil and conditioned by history' (1928c, 54). According to him, G must 'become the geographical conscience of the state' (1928a, 27). "Suggestive cartography" should educate the people for the 'struggle for survival on earth' (1929d, 346). As with **Ratzel**, **Haushofer** mobilises the argument of the 'increasing discrepancy between food supplies and population density' to justify demands for a 'redistribution of the living and breathing space on earth according to the working capacity and cultural performance of different peoples' (1928b, 41). Any legal recognition of consolidated borders is rejected (1934). A reasonable resolution of conflicting interests is declared illusory.

In the 1930s, under the impression of the foreign policy successes of the Nazi regime, G increasingly invoked the 'law of growing spaces', i.e. the idea of the permanent enlargement of state territory in the course of historical development, attacking the "liberal" small states of Europe and the tendency to legalise international politics. The unit of spatial organisation was no longer the nation state of the 19th cent., but the 'political *Großraum*', or even 'Empire' (**Maull** 1934; **Obst** 1941). In place of one universally applicable international law, Carl **Schmitt** (1939) advocates the pluralisation and regionalisation of diverse, co-existing, and mutually exclusive legal spheres: *Lebensraum*, *Großraum*, and Empire are the ordering terms that underpin his idea of a supranational hegemonic order in Central and Eastern Europe under German leadership, located between the Soviet bloc and the Western powers' spheres of interest. Schmitt's demand for a geopolitical revision of international law can be regarded as a 'legal claim for ground-rent in the inter-national context' (**Diner** 1984, 23 et sqq.). **Haushofer** pleads with reference to **Mackinder**'s heartland theory for the construction of a continental bloc, comprising Germany, the SU, and Japan (1940). This conception was instrumental for legitimising both the German-Japanese Anticomintern Pact (1936) and the German-Soviet non-aggression pact (1939). The contradiction between **Haushofer**'s anti-Bolshevism and his demands for a Eurasian bloc remains, of course, irresolvable. During the late 1930s, the term G becomes increasingly re-charged with *völkisch* notions (**Sandner** 1994, 10) and is finally subordinated to racial policies (cf. **Bassin** 1987).

4. The epistemological premises of historical materialism, as articulated by **Marx** and **Engels**, stand in many ways opposed to the causal factors that the geopolitical tradition prioritises for a comprehensive understanding of the political and geopolitical as dimensions of total social reproduction. However, by laying the foundations for historicising and contextualising the socio-polit-

ical construction of space, foreign policy, and international relations, **Marx** and **Engels** stress that nature, territory, and geography cannot remain pre-social constants. They are subject to transformation in their interaction with labour (**Schmidt** 1962). Still, the founders of historical materialism do not systematically incorporate the objective problems and phenomena highlighted by the geopolitical tradition in their wider reflections. This relative absence of the geopolitical has left a problematic legacy within Marxism (**Teschke** 2005).

The young **Marx** and **Engels** are still strongly influenced by the universalism of liberal theories of history and the free-trade cosmopolitanism of classical political economy, even though they reject the idea of the pacifying effect of world trade. **Marx** writes to **Annenkov** on 28 December 1846: 'What is the whole internal organisation of nations, what are their international relations, if not the expression of a given division of labour. And must they not change as the division of labour changes?' (MECW 34/98 [MEW 4/550]). Rejecting the limitations made on confining traditional historiography to 'spectacular historical events' (*GI*, MECW 5/50 [MEW 3/36]), the determination of international relations remains ambivalent. 'Bourgeois society comprises [...] the total commercial and industrial life of a particular stage and transcends in this respect each state and each nation, although it is required to represent itself externally as a nation and internally as a state' (ibid.). Worldwide free trade, in turn, is thought to be a precondition for the proletarian revolution on a world scale: 'Empirically, communism is only possible as the act of the dominant peoples "all at once" and simultaneously, which presupposes the universal development of productive forces and the world intercourse bound up with them' (49 [35]; modified in **Engels**, MECW 6/312 et sqq. [MEW 4/374], different in **Marx** and **Engels** in the *Manifesto*, 495 [473]). The problem of how states facilitate and enable circulation through their trade policies is mentioned (75 [53, 308]), but not integrated into this concept of history. Similarly, Engels records the non-simultaneity of the nationally differentiated economic, social, and political paths of development (MECW 6/15 [MEW 2/578]) and hopes for a shift in the European balance of power towards the progressive Western powers as a result of the bourgeois revolution in Germany. Both historical observations remain equally inconsequential for theory (MECW 6/64 [MEW 4/35 et sq.]). Classically, the *Manifesto* reads: 'The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the entire surface of the globe. [...] In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-Sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal inter-dependence of nations. [...] The bourgeoisie, by the rapid *improvement of all instruments* of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian nations into civilisation' (MECW 6/487 et sqq. [MEW 4/465]). The non-

simultaneity and relative political resistance of regionally differentiated and institutionalised class interests within the wider frame of a territorially constituted states-system remain outside the *Manifesto*'s theoretical perspective. Here, the notion of a 'simultaneous development on the world scale' prevails (**Soell** 1972, 112).

Beginning with the preparatory work for *Capital* and influenced by the failed 1848 revolution, this initial position is problematised and finally revised, as demonstrated by the planning sketches for *Capital*. However, the problem as to *why* political power constitutes itself territorially in the shape of a world system of politically sovereign states, whilst the world market as the sphere of private exchange assumes a universal form, is not even formulated as a research desideratum (see working plan for *Intro 57*). Equally, inter-state relations fail to appear in the projects that would eventually remain unfinished: '(3) Concentration of bourgeois society in the form of the state. Viewed in relation to itself. The "unproductive" classes. Taxes. State debt. Public credit. The population. The colonies. Emigration. (4) The international relation of production. International division of labour. International exchange. Export and import. Rate of exchange. (5) The world market and crises' (MECW 28/45 et sqq. [MEGA II.1.1/43; MEW 42/42]). However, the recognition of the problems inherent in the mediation between international relations and universal history start to change in the mid-1850s. First, **Marx**'s emphasis of the diachronic and regionally specific national developments ("*Sonderwege*" ["special paths"]), including his greater historical sensitivity to regionally differentiated forms of class struggle, crisis, and revolution, raises questions about the impact of the post-revolutionary state on the inter-state system. Second, Marx starts to inquire into the impact of conventional inter-state wars on social structure and political order. Third, he takes interest in the role that multilateral diplomacy plays in stabilising the international order. These questions cannot, however, be answered in the dialectical mode of presentation in *C 1*. They refer to a theoretically-informed re-reading of the historical material. Marx and **Engels** did not develop an integrated theory of international relations despite the shift in theoretical perspective. Their interest in G remains limited to *ad hoc* interventions.

During the 1848 revolutions, **Marx** and **Engels** assumed the outbreak of revolutionary wars between a democratic and united Germany and late-absolutist states (Denmark, Russia, Austria) would divide Europe into a revolutionary and a counter-revolutionary camp (MECW 7/115, 212, 352, 421 [MEW 5/105, 202, 334, 393]). The anticipated internationalisation of the revolution is thought to be carried out by a "world war" (505 [457]; MECW 8/215 [MEW 6/150]; MECW 9/148 et sqq., 197 et sqq. [MEW 6/382, 397 et sq.], MECW 6/463 [MEW 6/515]) between the ideals of freedom and despotism. This raises the problem of

the role that England – according to **Marx** the 'rock against which the revolutionary waves break' – is supposed to play. He confidently expects a defeat of England at the hands of a revolutionary and proletarian France (MECW 8/214 [MEW 6/148 et sqq.]). After the failure of 1848, Marx and **Engels** invert the nexus revolution–war into the nexus war–revolution during the 1850s and 1860s. Ruptures in the social and political fabric, especially in the defeated countries, are now expected after each war (MECW 12/107, 174, 227 [MEW 9/109, 176, 292). Still, **Marx**'s polemic against **Palmerston**'s secret diplomacy (MECW 39/395 [MEW 28/306]; MECW 10/510 et sqq. [MEW 7/441 et sq.]), which helped to preserve Tsarist Russia despite its defeat in the Crimean War due to British balance of power considerations, suggests that he strongly underestimated the whole sphere of diplomacy and alliance systems, i.e. the conscious and multilateral regulation of great-power relations. 'We had neglected this issue [foreign policy] too much' (MECW 39/395 [MEW 28/307]), **Marx** himself concedes. Subsequent reflections on world politics by Marx and **Engels** are characterised by their concern about securing the future of a united Germany. Especially Engels demonstrates strategic prescience by foreseeing Germany's emerging dual-front problem, anticipating, in fact, the Schlieffen-Plan strategy (MECW 16/239 [MEW 13/251 et sq.]). He suggests a 'speculative separation' of the 'separate field of foreign policy [...] from domestic politics'. This may mean that what appears to be 'subjectively reactionary' can function as 'objectively revolutionary in foreign policy' (letter to **Marx**, 31 May 1860, MECW 41/142 [MEW 30/59]).

Despite the fact that the European wars between 1853 and 1870 (with the exception of the Paris Commune) did not generate the expected outcomes, theoretically much more fundamental questions arise regarding the explanation of the origins of war, how to conceive of war, and how to integrate the consequences of war as critical junctures in the wider course of history. Even though **Marx** is clearly aware of the broader *problématique* of international relations, the logic of international and national class struggles is not persuasively mediated with the logic of inter-state competition in the context of the inter-state system. In *Gotha* he writes: 'It is altogether self-evident that, to be able to fight at all, the working class must organise itself at home *as a class* and that its own country is the immediate arena of its struggle – insofar as its class struggle is national, not in substance, but, as the *Manifesto* says, "in form". But the "framework of the present-day national state", for instance, the German Empire, is itself, in its turn, economically "within the framework" of the world market, politically "within the framework" of the system of states. Every businessman knows that German trade is at the same time foreign trade, and the greatness of Herr **Bismarck** consists, to be sure, precisely in his pursuing

a kind of *international* policy' (MECW 6/487 et sqq. [MEW 19/23 et sq]). **Engels** was certainly willing to grant foreign policy transitory primacy in the context of inter-state relations. From a military-political point of view he argues: 'The military strength required by a Great Power is not to be measured with a view to the greater or smaller likelihood of a coup d'état but according to the size of the army of other great powers' (MECW 20/61 [MEW 16/61]).

5. As a 'national *Staatswissenschaft* [science of the state]' G distinguishes itself from Marxism as well as from liberal notions of the state (*Denkschrift* 1933). Conversely, the classical geopolitical tradition is criticised by Marxism. Karl August **Wittfogel**'s critique of the **Kautsky** disciple Georg Engelbert **Graf**, who charged **Marx** with having 'neglected the primary, natural facts' (1919, 29, cf. 1924), forms the climax of this controversy. **Wittfogel** names the methodological differences between G and Marxism: 'Geographical factors do not directly impact on politics [...]; it is only within the process of production that these "primary, intrinsically natural elements" (**Graf**) assert themselves. Yet, even then, their impact is not a direct one. It is only through the specific social order as it is derived from the production process that the natural conditions influence the development of political life' (1929, 22). Heinrich **Cunow** (1921, 167) criticises **Ratzel**'s concept in a similar fashion.

According to Karl **Korsch**, German *Geopolitik* represents 'the expression as well as the weapon of a desperate attempt to solve the revolutionary problems of our times [...] through the cataclysm of a world-wide counter-revolution' (1943, 14). For Günter **Heyden**, it is 'a pseudo-scientific product of the imperialist stage of capitalist development' (1958, 483).

Observing the one-sided and non-dialectical emphasis that geopolitical doctrine imparts to soil, space, and power cannot obscure the neglect with which the official Marxisms of the Second and Third International treated the implications of the territorial distribution of state power. They gave preference to the category of time, which was perceived to be historically universal, over the category of space, which was socio-politically differentiated and simultaneously geographically co-determined. Here, the development of humanity was conceptualised in terms of a model society abstracted from all geographical and international contexts.

Since the 1970s, works inspired by world-systems theory and neo-Gramscianism try to re-synthesise reproductive strategies, territoriality, and world politics. The former (**Wallerstein** 1974) focus primarily on the relation between metropolis and periphery mediated by the division of labour and reproduced by unequal circulation; the latter group (**Cox** 1987; 1996, **Gill** 1990; 1993, **Rupert** 1994; 2000) conceptualises the relation between labour régimes, ideology-

construction, and hegemonic blocs. A final group (**Rosenberg** 1994; **van der Pijl** 1998; **Bromley** 1999; **Teschke** 1998; **Hardt/Negri** 2000) seeks a new interpretation of the CPE with the objective of developing an alternative universal-historical perspective on the socially uneven and geopolitically combined real development.

Luttwak sees the old G replaced by the dominance of 'geo-economics' in the context of globalisation – intensified global competition would lead in the long run to 'world economic war' (1994, 46). Triadisation, the formation of regional blocs, is one answer by states to economic globalisation (**Link** 1998, 79). However, the dynamic of continental bloc formation cannot prevail over the increased interconnectedness of Triad centres, which renders the intensification of inter-imperialist tensions unlikely (**Alnasseri** et al. 2001, 38). **Altvater** and **Mahnkopf** suggest that this 'militaristic peace [...] can surely only hold as long as shared interests prevail' (1996, 37). In this new constellation of globalisation the state becomes 'predominantly a geo-economic player and only in the second place a player within the system of international politics' (66).

Benno Teschke
Translated by Clemens Hoffmann, revised by Hunter Bolin

Bibliography

J. **Agnew**, *Geopolitics: Re-visioning World Politics*, London-New York 1998.

J. **Agnew**, S. **Corbridge**, *Mastering Space: Hegemony, Territory and International Political Economy*, London-New York 1995.

S. **Alnasseri** et al., 'Raum, Regulation und Periodisierung des Kapitalismus', *Das Argument* 239, vol. 42, 2001, 23–42.

E. **Altvater**, B. **Mahnkopf**, *Grenzen der Globalisierung*, Münster 1996.

R. **Ashley**, 'The Geopolitics of Political Space: Toward a Critical Social Theory of International Politics', *Alternatives*, vol. 12, 1987, 401–34.

M. **Bassin**, 'Race Contra Space: The Conflict between German *Geopolitik* and National Socialism', *Political Geography Quarterly*, vol. 6, 1987, no. 2, 115–34.

I. **Bowman**, *The New World: Problems in Political Geography*, London 1922.

F. **Braudel**, 'Géohistoire und geographischer Determinismus', M. Middell, S. Sammler (eds.), *Alles Gewordene hat Geschichte*, Leipzig 1994, 233–46.

R. **Brenner**, 'Bourgeois Revolution and Transition to Capitalism', A.L. Beier, D. Cannadine, J.M. Rosenheim (eds.), *The First Modern Society: Essays in English History in Honour of Lawrence Stone*, Cambridge 1989, 271–304.

S. **Bromley**, 'Marxism and Globalisation', A. Gamble, D. Marsh, T. Tant (eds.), *Marxism and Social Science*, London 1999, 280–301.

R. **Cox**, *Production, Power, and World Order: Social Forces in the Making of History*, New York 1987.

R. **Cox**, *Approaches to World Order*, Cambridge 1996.

H. **Cunow**, *Die Marxsche Geschichts-, Gesellschafts- und Staatstheorie: Grundzüge der Marxschen Soziologie*, 2 vols., Berlin 1920–1921.

H. **Cunow**, 'Denkschrift: Geopolitik als nationale Staatswissenschaft', *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*, vol. 10, 1933, 301–5.

I. **Diekmann**, P. **Krüger**, J.H. **Schoeps** (eds.), *Geopolitik: Grenzgänge im Zeitgeist*, vol. 2, Potsdam 2000.

D. **Diner**, 'Grundbuch des Planeten: Zur Geopolitik Karl Haushofers', *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, vol. 32, 1984, no. 1, 1–28.

K.-G. **Faber**, 'Zur Vorgeschichte der Geopolitik: Staat, Nation und Lebensraum im Denken deutscher Geographen vor 1914', H. Dollinger, H. Gründer, A. Hauschmidt (eds.), *Weltpolitik – Europagedanke – Regionalismus: Festschrift für Heinz Gollwitzer*, Münster 1982, 389–406.

J. **George**, *Discourses of Global Politics: A Critical (Re)-Introduction to International Relations*, Boulder (CO) 1994.

S. **Gill**, *American Hegemony and the Trilateral Commission*, Cambridge 1990.

S. **Gill** (ed.), *Gramsci, Historical Materialism and International Relations*, Cambridge 1993.

A. **Grabowsky**, *Raum, Staat und Geschichte: Grundlegung der Geopolitik*, Cologne-Berlin/W 1960.

G.E. **Graf**, *Die Landkarte Europas gestern und morgen*, Berlin 1919.

G.E. **Graf**, 'Geographie und materialistische Geschichtsauffassung', G. Jenssen (ed.), *Der lebendige Marxismus*, Jena 1924, 563–87.

C. **Gray**, *The Geopolitics of Super Power*, Lexington 1988.

J. **Habermas**, 'Eine Art Schadensabwicklung: Die apologetischen Tendenzen in der deutschen Zeitgeschichtsschreibung', *Historikerstreit: Die Dokumentation der Kontroverse um die Einzigartigkeit der nationalsozialistischen Judenvernichtung*, Munich 1987, 62–76.

M. **Hardt**, A. **Negri**, *Empire*, London-Cambridge 2000.

K. **Haushofer** et al., 'Über die historische Entwicklung des Begriffs Geopolitik', E. Obst et al. (eds.), *Bausteine zur Geopolitik*, Berlin 1928a.

K. **Haushofer**, 'Grundlage, Wesen und Ziele der Geopolitik', ibid. 1928b, 29–48.

K. **Haushofer**, 'Politische Erdkunde und Geopolitik', ibid. 1928c, 49–77.

K. **Haushofer**, 'Die Suggestive Karte', ibid. 1928d, 343–8.

K. **Haushofer**, 'Atemweite, Lebensraum und Gleichberechtigung auf Erden!', *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*, vol. 11, 1934, 1–14.

K. **Haushofer**, 'Der Kontinentalblock: Mitteleuropa-Eurasien-Japan', H.-A. Jacobsen (ed.), *Karl Haushofer: Leben und Werk*, vol. 1, Boppard 1979, 606–34.

G. **Heyden**, 'Kritik der geopolitischen Expansionstheorien des deutschen Imperialismus', R. Schulz (ed.), *Beiträge zur Kritik der gegenwärtigen bürgerlichen Geschichtsphilosophie*, Berlin/GDR 1958, 483–543.

H. **Kissinger**, *Diplomacy*, New York 1994.

R. **Kjellén**, *Der Staat als Lebensform* (1916), 4th edn., Leipzig 1924.

R. **Kjellén**, *Die Ideen von 1914: Eine weltgeschichtliche Perspektive* (1915), Leipzig 1918b.

P. **Kondylis**, *Theorie des Krieges: Clausewitz – Marx – Engels – Lenin*, Stuttgart 1988.

K. **Korsch**, 'A Historical View of Geopolitics', *New Essays*, vol. 6, 1943, no. 3, 8–17.

Y. **Lacoste**, *Dictionnaire de Géopolitique*, Paris 1993.

W. **Link**, *Die Neuordnung der Weltpolitik*, Munich 1998.

E.N. **Luttwak**, *Weltwirtschaftskrieg*, Reinbek 1994.

H.J. **Mackinder**, *Britain and the British Seas*, New York 1902.

H.J. **Mackinder**, 'The Geographical Pivot of History', *The Geographical Journal*, vol. 23, 1904, no. 4, 421–37.

H.J. **Mackinder**, *Democratic Ideals and Reality: A Study in the Politics of Reconstruction* (1919), New York 1944.

A.T. **Mahan**, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660–1783*, Boston 1890.

A.T. **Mahan**, *The Interest of America in Sea Power: Present and Future*, Boston 1897.

O. **Maull**, 'Die Erde als Lebensraum', K. Haushofer (ed.), *Raumüberwindende Mächte*, Leipzig-Berlin 1934, 7–34.

O. **Maull**, *Das Wesen der Geopolitik*, Leipzig 1936.

J. **Mearsheimer**, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, New York-London 2001.

H. **Morgenthau**, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (1948), New York 1985.

E. **Obst**, *Die Großmacht-Idee in der Vergangenheit und als tragender politischer Gedanke unserer Zeit*, Breslau 1941.

G. **Ó Tuathail**, *Critical Geopolitics: The Politics of Writing Global Space*, London 1996.

K. **van der Pijl**, *Transnational Classes and International Relations*, London-New York 1998.

F. **Ratzel**, *Anthropo-Geographie oder Grundzüge der Anwendung der Erdkunde auf die Geschichte*, vol. 1, Stuttgart 1882.

F. **Ratzel**, *Politische Geographie* (1897), Munich-Leipzig 1903.

F. **Ratzel**, 'Der Lebensraum: Eine biogeographische Studie', K. Bücher et al. (eds.), *Festgaben für Albert Schaffte*, Tübingen 1901.

J. **Rosenberg**, *The Empire of Civil Society: A Critique of the Realist Theory of International Relations*, London-New York 1994.

M. **Rupert**, *Producing Hegemony: The Politics of Mass Production and American Global Order*, Cambridge 1995.

M. **Rupert**, *Ideologies of Globalization: Contending Visions of a New World Order*, London 2000.

G. **Sandner**, 'Deterministische Wurzeln und funktionaler Einsatz des "Geo" in Geopolitik', *Welttrends*, no. 4, 1994, 8–24.

A. **Schmidt**, Der *Begriff der Natur in der Lehre von Marx*, Frankfurt/M 1962.

C. **Schmitt**, *Völkerrechtliche Großraumordnung mit Interventionsverbot für raumfremde Mächte: Ein Beitrag zum Reichsbegriff im Völkerrecht*, Berlin 1939.

C. **Schmitt**, *Der Nomos der Erde im Völkerrecht des Ius Publicum Europaeum*, Cologne 1950.

B. **Semmel**, *Imperialism and Social Reform: English Social-Imperial Thought 1895–1914*, London 1960.

H. **Soell**, 'Weltmarkt – Revolution – Staatenwelt: Zum Problem einer Theorie internationaler Beziehungen bei Marx und Engels', *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, vol. 12, 1972, no. 1, 109–84.

R. **Sprengel**, 'Geopolitik und Marxismus', *Berliner Debatte INITIAL*, vol. 6, 1995, no. 3, 11–24.

R. **Sprengel**, *Kritik der Geopolitik: Ein deutscher Diskurs*, Berlin 1996.

R. **Strausz-Hupé**, *Geopolitics: The Struggle for Space and Power*, New York 1942.

B. **Teschke**, 'Geopolitical Relations in the European Middle Ages: History and Theory', *International Organization*, vol. 52, 1998, no. 2, 325–58.

B. **Teschke**, 'Bourgeois Revolution, State-Formation and the Absence of the International', *Historical Materialism*, vol. 13, 2005, no. 2, 3–26.

R.B.J. **Walker**, *Inside/Outside: International Relations Theory as Political Theory*, Cambridge 1993.

I. **Wallerstein**, *The Modern World System, I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*, New York 1974.

K. **Waltz**, *Theory of International Politics*, Reading (MA) 1979.

H.-U. **Wehler**, *Entsorgung der deutschen Vergangenheit? Ein polemischer Essay zum "Historikerstreit"*, Munich 1988.

K.A. **Wittfogel**, 'Geopolitik, geographischer Materialismus und Marxismus', *Unter dem Banner des Marxismus*, vol. 3, 1929, no. 1, 17–51, no. 4, 485–522, no. 5, 698–735.

→ certainty, colonialism, composition plans, dependency theory, earth, empire, Eurocentrism, formation theory, globalisation, international, international relations, Kautskyanism, Malthusianism, Marxism, materialism (geographical), Monroe doctrine, neocolonialism, Occidentalism, Paris Commune, periphery/centre, politics, population theory, relations of intercourse, secret diplomacy, space, theory of social development, time, trade, universal history, war and peace, world war, world system

→ Aufbaupläne, Dependenztheorie, Erde, Eurozentrismus, Formationstheorie, Geheimdiplomatie, Globalisierung, Handel, Imperium, Internationale, internationale Beziehungen, Kautskyanismus, Kolonialismus, Krieg und Frieden, Malthusianismus, Marxismus, Materialismus (geographischer), Monroedoktrin, Neokolonialismus, Okzidentalismus, Pariser Kommune, Politik, Peripherie/Zentrum, Populationstheorie, Raum, Sicherheit, Theorie der gesellschaftlichen Entwicklung, Universalgeschichte, Verkehrsverhältnisse, Weltkrieg, Weltsystem, Zeit

CHAPTER 20

German Misery, German Wretchedness

A: taʿāsa ʾalmānīya. – F: misère allemande. – G: deutsche Misere. – R: germanskaja niščeta. – S: miseria alemana. – C: Déguó de kunku, Déguó de bǐsúqì 德国的贫困, 德国的鄙俗气

The term GM, or GW – used by **Engels**, adopted by Franz **Mehring**, and, eventually, applied by Georg **Lukács** more broadly and systematically – denotes a configuration of motifs from which **Marx** and **Engels** construed certain particularities of German history – in comparison to English and French history – as a contradictory relation of inferiority and superiority.

Engels used the term for the very first time in his review of Karl **Grün**'s book *Über Goethe vom menschlichen Standpunkt* (MECW 6/259 [MEW 4/232]), albeit in passing and without any claim to defining a historiographic category. In his characterisation of the relationship of **Goethe** ('at one moment a towering figure, at the next petty') and **Schiller** ('exchange of a prosaic form of wretchedness for a grandiloquent one') with social reality, though, he was able to build on, firstly, the tradition of contrasting wretched German reality with great German ideas, a tradition stretching from Friedrich **Schlegel** to Germaine **de Staël** to **Hegel** and Heinrich **Heine**, as well as Karl **Gutzkow**, and, secondly, on Moses **Hess**'s comparison of Germany with England and France (1841). For Hess the term denoted the consequence of Germany's immaturity for proletarian and over-maturity for bourgeois revolution: 'the German bourgeoisie seems damned to be washed to and fro between fear and hope on the still ocean of GM, until the storm from the West breaks and the waves of the proletariat, foaming out of the deep, crash down on monarchy, nobility and bourgeoisie' (*Deutsche-Brüsseler-Zeitung*, 11 November 1847, transl. cit. **Gascoigne** 1985, 158).

By comparing 'the three foremost countries at the present moment in history', **Engels** the Young German, in his articles on *The Condition of England*, substantiated his prognosis that England would experience 'a more universal, a social revolution' (MECW 3/471 [MEW 1/552]), as opposed to the philosophical revolution of the Christian-spiritualist paradigm in Germany and the political revolution of the materialist paradigm in France; without using the term GM or GW, in his *CHPL*, **Marx** the Young Hegelian, by contrast, had already accentuated the 'anachronism' (176 [379]) of the German status quo, the 'wretchedness [*Erbärmlichkeit*]' (177 [380]) of which was characterised by the 'limitedness' (185 [389]) of interests on the one hand and by 'abstract extravagant think-

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_021
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

ing' (181 [384]) on the other, as a precondition for going beyond the political emancipation (in France) and attaining, through the actions of the proletariat, human emancipation (in Germany): 'In Germany emancipation from the *Middle Ages* is possible only as emancipation from the *partial* victories over the Middle Ages as well' (187 [391]). To Marx, on the one hand, '[t]he struggle against the German political present is the struggle against the past of the modern nations' (178 [381]), while in Germany, on the other, 'universal emancipation is the *conditio sine qua non* of any partial emancipation'; both followed from his basic assumption that 'in Germany [it is] the impossibility of gradual liberation that must give birth to complete freedom' (186 [390]).

Marx concurred with **Heine** both in his understanding of the Reformation as 'Germany's revolutionary past' (3/182 [1/385]) and with regard to the comparison between classical German idealism and the French Revolution (which **Engels** re-affirmed in 1888; 26/357 [21/265]), seeing Germany's thinkers as 'philosophical contemporaries of the present' who were '*al pari* with the *official* modern reality' (3/180 [1/383]). Adhering to the concept of the realisation of philosophy by the proletariat, however, **Marx** regards Germany's economic and political backwardness as the 'advantage' of the German 'sense of theory', as **Engels** put it in 1874: 'Without German philosophy, particularly that of **Hegel**, German scientific socialism – the only scientific socialism that has ever existed – would never have come into being' (23/630 [18/516]). In the *Varia on Germany*, written between 1873–4, **Engels** tersely noted: 'abstraction from wretched reality – basis of subsequent theoretical superiority of the Germans from **Leibniz** to **Hegel**' (600 [590]). Concerning the 'German' in Hegel, he remarked as late as 1888: 'Hegel was a German, and like his contemporary **Goethe**, had a bit of the philistine's tail dangling behind. Each of them was an Olympian Zeus in his own sphere, yet neither of them ever quite freed himself from German philistinism' (26/361 [21/269]).

The entire work of **Marx** and **Engels** is interspersed by various motifs of this configuration, which only Engels captured in the term GM: 1) the unity of philistinism and ingenuity, narrow-mindedness and exuberance, concretism and abstraction; 2) the distinction between 'three great, decisive battles' in the 'fight of the bourgeoisie against feudalism' (27/290 [22/300]) which identifies Germany with the intellectual revolutions of the Reformation and classical idealism; and 3) the juxtaposition of '[g]reat nations – the French, North Americans, English – [...] constantly comparing themselves with one another' (5/441 [3/426]) and 'learn[ing] from others' (*C I*, 92 [MEW 23/15]), and those consisting of 'philistines' who 'hide behind the shield of incomparability' (5/441 [3/426]). **Marx** condensed the lesson in the preface to *Capital*: 'In all other spheres, and just like the rest of Continental Western Europe, we suffer not only from the

development of capitalist production, but also from the incompleteness of that development' (*C I*, 91 [MEW 23/12]).

The significance of the motifs underlying the GW configuration changed along with the development of the workers' movement, as is reflected in the specific context-related use of the term by **Engels**.

Already his verdict that Germany was 'nothing but a dunghill' (MECW 6/17 [MEW 2/566]) was somewhat inconsistent, insofar as he simultaneously considered the country's literature to be the 'only hope for the better' (6/17 [2/567]) in his articles on *The State of Germany* (*Deutsche Zustände*); the same inconsistency, however, also pervades the work of **Goethe**, **Schiller**, **Kant**, **Fichte**, and **Hegel** that was held in such high esteem, seeing as the 'spirit of defiance and rebellion' (18 [567]) expressed therein is measured against the French Revolution, whose 'consequences in practice' lead even the 'benevolent theorists' to '[prefer] their old quiet holy Roman dunghill to the tremendous activity of a people' (18 [568]).

In the *GI*, **Kant**'s philosophy is contrasted with the political revolution in France and the Industrial Revolution in Britain: it 'fully corresponds to the [...] wretchedness of the German burghers, whose petty interests were never capable of developing into the common, national interests of a class' (5/193 et sq. [3/177]): 'These petty, local interests had as their counterpart, on the one hand, the truly local and provincial narrow-mindedness of the German burghers and, on the other hand, their cosmopolitan swollen-headedness' (194 [177]). It is this constellation from which **Marx** and **Engels** concluded the 'abnormal' role of state bureaucracy and 'the conscientiousness of the civil servant [in Germany], which is found nowhere else' (195 [178]).

When **Engels**, in his 1850 article series *The Peasant War in Germany*, sketched an analogy between 1525 and 1848, captured in the term 'provincial narrow-mindedness' – a factor so ruinous to the revolution – he simultaneously drew a decisive distinction between the two events: 'The Revolution of 1525 was a domestic German affair. The English, French, Bohemians and Hungarians had already had their peasant wars when the Germans began theirs. If Germany was disunited, Europe was much more so. The Revolution of 1848 [...] was an episode in a great European event' (10/481 et sq. [7/413]).

In contrast to this claim of German contemporaneity, **Engels**, referring to the Bismarckian 'revolutionising of Germany from above' (26/499 [21/451]) understood as 'a very, very long overdue and imperfect imitation of what the French Revolution had already done seventy years before, and what all other civilised states had introduced long ago' (484 [435]), on the one hand stressed the European significance of the Reformation as the German revolution; and

on the other the still outstanding 'sweep[ing] away' of the 'remnants of feudalism and of patriarchal absolutism', which he expected to be enacted not by the 'stupid and cowardly' (546 [383]), or 'cowardly and limp' (500 [451]) German bourgeoisie, but by the working class. Both in the fields of theory and of democratisation, he diagnosed an '[a]bdication of the Bourgeoisie' (546 [383]): 'With the revolution of 1848, "educated" Germany said farewell to theory and went over to the field of practice. [...] Only among the working class does the German aptitude for theory remain unimpaired' (397 [306 et sq.]).

Nevertheless, **Engels** saw the empire on a 'course which would enable it to catch up with the other, politically far more advanced West-European states, to shake off the last remnants of feudalism and philistine traditions which still held a firm grip on the bureaucracy' (26/502 [21/453]): 'only thus was it possible gradually to transplant all the achievements of the Great French Revolution to Germany, in short, to cut off Germany's overlong old pigtail, and to place it deliberately and irrevocably on the road of modern development, to adapt its political system to its industrial development' (502 [454]).

Both qualifications were consistent with his 1892 assessment that the German working class was 'well ahead' (27/301 [22/311]) of the English and also the French working classes: 'Four hundred years ago, Germany was the starting-point of the first upheaval of the European middle class; as things are now, is it outside the limits of possibility that Germany will be the scene, too, of the first great victory of the European proletariat?' (302 [311]) That same year, however, **Engels** wrote to **Marx**'s daughter Laura: 'A country cannot pass through 200 years like what 1648–1848 were for Germany without leaving a small impression of the philistine even on the working class. Our revolution of 48/49 was too short and too incomplete to wipe that out altogether' (50/59 [38/545]). This is why his claim that the significance of theory turned the workers' movement 'belong[ing] to the most theoretical people of Europe' (23/630 [18/516]) into the 'vanguard' (631 [517]) of the European workers' movement was at least complemented, in 1874, by the reminder 'that it developed on the shoulders of the English and French movements' (630 [516]) and an admonition 'to safeguard the true international spirit, which allows no patriotic chauvinism to arise': 'it is not at all in the interest of this movement that the workers of any particular country should march at its head' (631 et sq. [517]).

In a footnote **Engels** added in 1883, he corrected an earlier apparent 'slip of the pen' and pointed out the importance of 'the developed economic and political conditions of England and France': while, in 1882, he had considered the development of scientific socialism from a utopian idea to have been possible only 'in Germany', his subsequent correction replaced the words 'an essentially

German product' with the phrase 'not an exclusively German, but just as much a[n] international product' (24/458 [19/187]).

While **Engels** had diagnosed a 'peculiar fate of Prussia to complete its bourgeois revolution – which began in 1808 to 1813 and advanced to some extent in 1848 – in the pleasant form of Bonapartism at the end of this century' (23/628 [18/513]), **Lenin** termed this 'road' of bourgeois revolution the 'path of Germany', which he distinguished from 'the path taken by France', albeit without using the term GW; he emphasised the implications of the non-'consummation' (CW 9/241; CW 16/202 [Werke 9/236; 16/201]) of the bourgeois revolution for the democratic tasks of the working class: 'In Prussia, and in Germany in general, the landowner never relinquished his hegemony during the whole period of bourgeois revolutions and he "educated" the bourgeoisie in his own image, after his own likeness. In France, during all the eighty years of bourgeois revolutions, the proletariat, in various combinations with the "Left bloc" elements of the petty bourgeoisie, won for itself hegemony at least four times, and as a result the bourgeoisie had to create a political system more acceptable to its opposite' (CW 17/413 [Werke 17/402]).

In his *Lessing-Legende* (1891–2), **Mehring** expanded – with reference to **Heine**'s *Religion and Philosophy in Germany* (1834) – **Engels**'s key phrase about the 'victory of wretchedness over the greatest of Germans', which appeared to provide 'the most conclusive proof that it cannot be surmounted at all "from within"' (MECW 6/259 [MEW 4/232]), into a conception of 'classical literature' as the 'German bourgeois classes' incipient struggle for emancipation, [... which] because of the economic and political backwardness of these classes, could only be realised by their intellectually advanced elements at the ethereal heights of ideas' (**Mehring**, GS 9, 46).

In 1932, the first reprint of **Engels**'s review of **Grün** was published as an 'unknown treatise' in the Goethe Special Issue of the *Linkskurve*, featuring a polemic commentary by Karl August **Wittfogel** and **Lukács** directed against **Mehring** or, rather, against the publication of his writings on literary history edited by Eduard **Fuchs** and August **Thalheimer**, theoretician of the Communist Party of Germany (Opposition). **Mehring** had not included **Engels**'s review, whose author he had believed to be **Marx**, in his 1902 edition *Aus dem literarischen Nachlass von Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels und Ferdinand Lassalle*. As a result, **Wittfogel** and **Lukács** saw the need for 'a critical review of **Mehring**'s legacy as literary critic' (*Die Linkskurve*, vol. 4, 1932, Special Issue, 13), so as to prove that the 'views of the Second International' as a whole, and Mehring's 'analysis and appraisal' of **Goethe** and **Schiller** in particular, were in 'diametrical opposition to **Marx** and **Engels**'s assessment': 'he was neither willing nor

able to admit the idealist atrophy of German Classicism' (12). Regardless of the harshness of **Wittfogel** and **Lukács**'s critique of **Goethe**: 'Germany's greatest poet – a victim of German "wretchedness"' (*Die rote Fahne*, 22 March 1932), **Lukács**'s defence of **Goethe** the "Westerner" against his incorporation into the localism or "down-to-earth attitude" ["*Bodenständigkeit*"] of fascists and social-democratic nationalists deemed "social-fascist" anticipates some of the aspects of **Lukács**'s subsequent elaboration of the concept of "wretchedness".

Lukács emphasised 'that although **Goethe** had not understood the French Revolution and rejected it, he had always sympathised with **Napoleon**, with England, in short, with the then progressive "Western" bourgeois civilisation of the day, that his early development was strongly influenced by **Voltaire**, **Diderot**, **Rousseau**, etc., and that even in old age he had a fervent interest in the literature of the West, in **Balzac**, **Stendhal**, and **Mérimée**, in **Byron** and **Scott**, and in **Hugo** and **Béranger**, while disregarding the "closed-minded" ["*bodenständig*", i.e. "rooted to the soil"] and reactionary German literature' (*Die Linkskurve*, op. cit., 39). **Wittfogel** generalised **Goethe**'s brokenness from GW as the signature feature of not only German literary history: 'The German bourgeoisie, the laggard and stepchild of European economic development, was not yet able in 1800, and was no longer able by 1848 [...] to really take its own revolution seriously and lead it to success. [...] That great novel brought forth by the western bourgeois democracies of France, England, and America could not be realised in Germany, or at best in a stunted form, as a snobbish amusement, as an unusual experiment' (7 et sq.).

Lukács did subsequently invoke **Mehring** – whose account **Engels** had agreed with on 14 July 1893 ('I have always found, when studying German history – which is one long, continuous *misère* – that a true perspective can only be obtained by comparing it with the same periods in France, because what happens there is the exact opposite of what happens in Germany'; MECW 50/166 [MEW 39/99]) – when, under the conditions of the fight against fascism, he generalised the concept of wretchedness with reference to German history to date back to the Reformation and the Peasant War. 'The defeat of the 1848 Revolution put an end to all attempts to emancipate Germany, to cast off the GW' (**Lukács** 1945, 20): this served as the starting point for Lukács's outline of *Fortschritt und Reaktion in der deutschen Literatur* ("Progress and Reaction in German Literature"), first published in 1945. By declaring the defeat of 1848 the decisive 'turning point in German history', which had 'proven all earlier literary and ideological groundwork futile' (ibid.), he not only gained an explanation for the triumph of fascism, but also thereby defined the essential features of a curriculum for post-war re-education in Germany.

A comparison of the two posthumously published preliminary versions with the relevant chapter in *The Destruction of Reason* (**Lukács** 1954/1980) reveals how, on the one hand, the guiding image of Western democracy is conceived more clearly during the years of the Second World War's "Grand Alliance" against **Hitler**'s Germany – particularly after the extermination camps revealed the 'depth of the spiritual poisoning of the German people' (**Lukács** 1944/1970, 50), and, on the other, an ambivalence already inherent in **Engels** and **Mehring** is becoming increasingly prominent. In this sense, intellectual superiority over England and France – embodied in philosophy and literature by **Hegel** and **Goethe** – appears as the 'positive flip side of Germany's backwardness' (**Lukács** 1941/1982, 79) and of the lack of revolutionary, democratic traditions in particular. Lukács deduces the latter from the 'delayed' development of capitalism without an abolition of the 'remnants of pre-capitalist development' (1933/1982, 78): 'Germany has become a modern country economically and the Germans became a unified nation, without being a politically modern and democratic people' (1944/1970, 63). Lukács describes the consequences thereof, in social-psychological terms (frequently citing Thomas **Mann**'s phrase of "power-protected inwardness"), as a combination of bureaucratism and subjectivism – and, subsequently, romantic anti-capitalism and irrationalism – encapsulated in the 'GW', which, in turn, he considers synonymous with Prussianism, a tradition that – 'in contrast to the organically developed modern societies' – entails 'no democratic socialisation, no permanent control of the state apparatus by public life and that individuals stand generally outside the political process' (1943/1970, 34 et sq.). In his view, this 'paralyses in each and every German their democratic self-esteem, the personal independence relying on and deeply interwoven with public opinion, which by that very fact often dares to courageously swim against the stream' (1944/1970, 65).

Lukács's complex concept, which always seeks to distinguish between the economy, class struggles, politics, and intellectual and literary history, nevertheless exhibits certain points of contact with other contemporaneous models of German history that rather presume identity, not only in the sense of a national character, such as in the case of "Vansittartism", but also in terms of social psychology and intellectual history, such as Erich **Fromm** and Herbert **Marcuse** in *Studies on Authority and the Family* (1936) or Helmuth **Plessner** in *The Delayed Nation* (1935). Ernst **Bloch**'s depiction of Germany, 'unlike England, and especially France – [as] the classical land of non-contemporaneity' (*HOT*, 1935/1991, 106), corresponds to the accentuation of economic modernism and simultaneous political and ideological anti-modernism in **Lukács**'s concept of wretchedness, while Theodor W. **Adorno**'s later response to 'the Question: What is German?' (1969) picks up on **Lukács**'s contradiction between intel-

lectual revolution and barbarism and, using his *Dialectic of Enlightenment* as a framework, states: 'If in fact for long periods of time in the early bourgeois history the meshes of civilization's net – of bourgeoisification – were not so tightly woven in Germany as in the Western countries, this allowed a reserve of untapped natural forces to accumulate. This engendered the unwavering radicalism of spirit just as well as the permanent possibility of relapse' (**Adorno** 1969/2005, 208).

In the post-war era, **Lukács**'s agenda of re-education through 'self-examination' (1944/1970, 63) had an impact on and through Alexander **Abusch** (1946), Leo **Kofler** (1948), and Jürgen **Kuczynski** (1947), but even **Brecht**'s (and Ernst **Fischer**'s) rejection of the criticism of **Eisler**'s *Doctor Faustus*, as well as that of the *Urfaust* production at the Berliner Ensemble theatre, remained within the framework set by **Lukács**'s concept: 'anyone who [...] talks of *deutsche Misere* in order to combat it, himself belongs to [...] those who make it impermissible to talk of German history as nothing but *Misere*' (**Brecht** 1953/2003, 328).

Beginning with **Brecht**'s futile intervention against the banishment of the term (1952–3) by the state party SED which found itself unable to reconcile it with a national optimism geared towards the aspiration to reunify Germany and to create the conditions for socialism in the GDR (a concept of historical awareness that would come to be defined by the phrase "the victors of history") there is a continuous line of tradition – initially centred principally on the East German dramatic arts – that runs from Peter **Hacks** and Heiner **Müller** to Thomas **Brasch**, and, during the 1970s and 80s in the GDR, on to the literary engagement with the long-term repercussions of Prussian authoritarianism and fascism more generally. The literary domain did not toe the line regarding the re-evaluation of Prussia, which was ongoing in history departments and journalism from the 1970s onward and marked an explicit break with **Mehring**'s and **Lukács**'s concepts.

In the FRG, the GW concept had been debated under the term "*deutscher Sonderweg*" (German "special path") since the 1960s, when Jürgen **Habermas**, in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, contrasted German backwardness with the 'Model Case of British Development' (1963/1991, 57) of a politically functioning critical public sphere. It was then that, through Ralf **Dahrendorf**'s *Society and Democracy in Germany* (1965/1967), the core thesis, championed even by non-Marxists, of the 'supposed failure or absence of bourgeois revolution in German history' (**Blackbourn**/**Eley** 1984, 39), found its way into the international debate, resonating with, for example, Barrington **Moore** and Nicos **Poulantzas.** David **Blackbourn** and Geoff **Eley** rejected the notion of an "authoritarian character" that was "particular to" the German bourgeoisie,

because, firstly, it implied the 'liberal teleology' (98) that 'a "rising" bourgeoisie [...] should be naturally or necessarily liberal in its political inclinations' (56), and, secondly, it misled scholars to place an inflated 'stress on "values" and "ideology"' as an object of study and resulted in 'a *primacy of "pre-industrial traditions"* in the explanatory repertoire of German historians' (92 et sq.).

In West German historiography, **Blackbourn** and **Eley**'s efforts to relativise Britain's exemplary model, which had been implied by the "*Sonderweg*" concept, found support among neo-conservative scholars who subsequently became prominent during the German *Historikerstreit* ("Historians' Debate"). Ernst **Nolte** and Michael **Stürmer**'s attacks were generally directed against the notion of anti-fascism inherent in the *Sonderweg* concept and, in particular, against the influence of **Lukács**'s 'ideological teleology' (***Deutscher Sonderweg***, 1982, 67). Both liberal and left-liberal participants in the debate redefined the concept as a *Sonderbewußtsein* ("special consciousness") that supposedly was to be limited to the "ideas of 1914" [translator's note: i.e., the writings published by nationalist and conservative German intellectuals in their immediate response to the outbreak of war in August 1914], which then had an impact on the subsequent "*Sonderweg*" (which, in turn, would supposedly be limited to the years 1933 to 1945).

Since the late 1970s, the normative limitations to the historical discussion were contrasted by the tendency towards a specific generalisation of the concept in debates around literature and cultural politics. Ever since Hans **Mayer**'s talk at the founding conference of the *Kulturkreis des Kuratoriums Unteilbares Deutschland* ("Cultural Circle of the Committee for an Indivisible Germany") in 1978, which interpreted the cultural developments in both German states as a confirmation of the failure of the revolution and the Enlightenment, a concept of wretchedness took hold that considered it a recurring structural feature of German history: 'Situations of profound social crises engender unexecuted (i.e. only imagined) or unsuccessful (aborted or deformed) "revolutions"' (**Klussmann**/**Mohr** 1982, 3). Given that the equation of wretchedness in the FRG and the GDR – underscoring, as it were, the "unity of the *Kulturnation*" – also implicitly addressed "national identity" and "reunification", the term could also be utilised by conservatives; in 1979, the Karl Arnold Foundation, a think tank affiliated with the CDU, organised an annual conference of its working group on Literature and German Philology in the GDR titled 'GW as a Theme in Contemporary Literature'; on 14 February 1986, an editorial in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* entitled 'The GW' issued a reminder to its readers of the 'great German predicament' of 'disunion', which was supposedly being 'eclipsed' by some imagined suffering.

Even if this topos – as part of the nationalising trend within West German discourse – should have helped prepare the ground for the formal integration of what had been the GDR into the FRG, the trajectory of "unification" could nonetheless rather be understood – by both West German opponents (Michael **Schneider**) and East German advocates of national "unity" (Jens **Reich**) alike – as confirmation of the more defeatist variant of its meaning attached to the notion of unresolvably "suffering from Germany". **Habermas**, by contrast, rejected the claim – championed by Heiner **Müller** and Christa **Wolf**, among others – that the 'adaptations [which] were made to the mentality and culture of the superpowers that dominated *in each of the two fragmentary states*' had 'led *both* countries, in their different ways, to distance themselves from the potential of their tradition in the unified German culture that existed before' (**Wolf** 1994/1997, 114). **Habermas** asserted that **Adorno** (in the FRG) and **Lukács** (in the GDR) had contributed to a 'cleansing self-reflection' (1994/1998, 104) and to advancing 'an orientation towards the West that was [...] experienced as emancipatory' (102), in the sense of seeking 'not only to make a clean break with the political legacy of the Nazi regime but also with the deeper-reaching intellectual roots of laudatory German mandarism and its murky German spirit' (101): 'One must first recognize the elements of the German tradition that are inimical to culture before one can learn to see the tradition's universalistic, enlightening, and subversive features as well' (103).

Helmut Peitsch
Translated by Jan-Peter Herrmann

Bibliography

A. **Abusch**, *Der Irrweg einer Nation*, Berlin 1946.

Th.W. **Adorno**, 'On the Question: "What is German?"' (1965), *Critical Models: Interventions and Catchwords*, transl. H.W. Pickford, New York 2005, 205–14.

W. **Berthold**, *Marxistisches Geschichtsbild: Volksfront und antifaschistisch-demokratische Revolution: Zur Vorgeschichte der Geschichtswissenschaft der DDR und zur Konzeption der Geschichte des deutschen Volkes*, Berlin/GDR 1970.

D. **Blackbourn**, G. **Eley**, *The Peculiarities of German History: Bourgeois Society and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Germany*, Oxford-New York 1984.

E. **Bloch**, *Heritage of Our Times* (1935), transl. N. Plaice and S. Plaice, Berkeley-Los Angeles 1991.

B. **Brecht**, 'Theses on the *Faustus* Discussion', *Brecht on Art and Politics* (1953), ed. S. Giles and T. Kuhn, London-New York 2003, 327–31.

R. **Dahrendorf**, *Society and Democracy in Germany* (1965), New York-London 1967.

Deutscher Sonderweg *– Mythos oder Realität?* (Kolloquien des Instituts für Zeitgeschichte), Munich-Vienna 1982.

A. **Dorpalen**, *German History in Marxist Perspective: The East German Approach*, London 1985.

E. **Fromm**, 'Studies on Authority and the Family: Sociopsychological Dimensions' (1936), *Fromm Forum: Erich Fromm's Early Writings*, special edition, Tübingen 2020, transl. S. Kassouf, 8–58.

R. **Gascoigne**, *Religion, Rationality and Community: Sacred and Secular in the Thought of Hegel and his Critics*, International Archives of the History of Ideas, vol. 105, Dordrecht (NL) 1985.

J. **Habermas**, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1963), Cambridge (MA) 1991.

J. **Habermas**, 'A Letter to Christa Wolf' (1994), *A Berlin Republic: Writings on Germany*, transl. S. Rendall, London 1998, 95–106.

H. **Heine**, *Religion and Philosophy in Germany: A Fragment* (1834), transl. J. Snodgrass, London 1882.

M. **Hess**, *Die europäische Triarchie*, Leipzig 1841.

M. **Horkheimer** (ed.), *Studien über Autorität und Familie*, Paris 1936.

P.G. **Klussmann**, H. **Mohr** (eds.), *Deutsche Misere einst und jetzt: Die deutsche Misere als Thema der Gegenwartsliteratur: Das Preußensyndrom in der Literatur der DDR*, Bonn 1982.

L. **Kofler**, *Zur Geschichte der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft* (1948), Berlin 1992.

J. **Kuczynski**, *Die Bewegung der deutschen Wirtschaft von 1800 bis 1946*, Berlin 1947.

G. **Lukács**, *Skizze einer Geschichte der neueren deutschen Literatur* (1945), Darmstadt 1964.

G. **Lukács**, 'Über Preussentum' (1943), *Marxismus und Stalinismus: Politische Aufsätze*, Ausgewählte Schriften IV, Reinbek 1970, 29–49.

G. **Lukács**, 'Schicksalswende' (1944), *Marxismus und Stalinismus*, 1970, 50–68.

G. **Lukács**, *Wie ist die faschistische Philosophie in Deutschland entstanden?* (1933), Budapest 1982.

G. **Lukács**, *Wie ist Deutschland zum Zentrum der reaktionären Ideologie geworden?* (1941), Budapest 1982.

G. **Lukács**, *Die Zerstörung der Vernunft: Der Weg des Irrationalismus von Schelling zu Hitler*, Berlin/GDR-Weimar 1954.

G. **Lukács**, *The Destruction of Reason*, London 1980.

H. **Marcuse**, 'Ideengeschichtlicher Teil', M. Horkheimer (ed.) 1936, 136–228.

H. **Mayer**, 'Literatur heute im geteilten Deutschland', W. Link (ed.), *Schriftsteller und Politik in Deutschland*, Düsseldorf 1979.

H. **Mayer**, *Das unglückliche Bewußtsein: Zur deutschen Literaturgeschichte von Lessing bis Heine*, Frankfurt/M 1986.

F. **Mehring**, 'Die Lessing-Legende' (1891–2), GS 9, Berlin/GDR 1963.
I. **Münz-Koenen**, '"Johann Faustus" – ein Werk, das Fragment blieb, und eine Debatte, die Legende wurde', I. Münz-Koenen (ed.), *Werke und Wirkungen: DDR-Literatur in der Diskussion*, Leipzig 1987.
H. **Plessner**, *Die verspätete Nation: Über die Verführbarkeit bürgerlichen Geistes* (1935), Stuttgart 1959.
K. **Sontheimer**, 'Der "Deutsche Geist" als Ideologie: Ein Beitrag zur Theorie vom deutschen Sonderbewußtsein', M. Funke et al. (eds.), *Demokratie und Diktatur: Geist und Gestalt politischer Herrschaft in Deutschland und Europa*, Bonn 1987.
W. **Wippermann**, '"Deutsche Katastrophe" oder "Diktatur des Finanzkapitals"? Zur Interpretationsgeschichte des Dritten Reiches im Nachkriegsdeutschland', H. Denkler, K. Prümm (eds.), *Die deutsche Literatur im Dritten Reich*, Stuttgart 1976.
C. **Wolf**, *Parting from Phantoms: Selected Writings, 1990–1994* (1994), transl. J.v. Heurck, Chicago 1997.

→ antifascism, Bonapartism, bourgeois development of Germany, bourgeois society, bourgeoisie, civil servants, classical German philosophy, enlightenment, fascism, French Revolution, industrialisation, intellectuals, inwardness, irrationalism, Lukács School, modernisation, nationalism, non-simultaneity, passive revolution, peasant war, petty bourgeois, Prussian path, reformation, servility

→ Antifaschismus, Aufklärung, Bauernkrieg, Beamte, Bonapartismus, Bourgeoisie, bürgerliche Entwicklung Deutschlands, bürgerliche Gesellschaft, bürgerliche Revolution, Faschismus, Französische Revolution, Industrialisierung, Innerlichkeit, Intellektuelle, Irrationalismus, klassische deutsche Philosophie, Kleinbürger, Lukács-Schule, Modernisierung, Nationalismus, passive Revolution, preußischer Weg, Reformation, Servilität, Ungleichzeitigkeit

CHAPTER 21

Haitian Revolution

A: aṯ-ṯaura al-hā'ītīya. – F: Révolution haïtienne. – G: Haitianische Revolution. – R: Gaitjanskaja revoljucija. – S: Revolución haitiana. – C: Hǎidì gémìng 海地革命

The revolution in the French colony of Saint-Domingue is unique among the revolutions of the 18th and 19th cent.s. It began in 1791 with a slave rebellion, and in 1804, after years of bloody conflict, it led to the establishment of Haiti, the first independent black state in the Western hemisphere and the second independent state in America. Being the only successful slave rebellion in world history, the HR is of paramount interest. In contrast to the revolutions in the Spanish and English colonies, it not only achieved political independence but also entailed a fundamental social revolution that placed the complex and often contradictory relationships between class antagonisms and antagonisms based on "race" and ethnicity at the centre of political life. Thus, the events of the HR made both the potential scope of universalist emancipatory thought and its factual limits and theoretical contradictions visible in a unique way. However, in contrast to the French and also the US-American Revolution, the HR had little direct influence on the heterogeneous emancipation movements of the 19th and 20th cent.s. If Haiti was mentioned at all, it was often invoked as a "spectre" and as a danger to be avoided by all means: not a model for emancipation movements, but a perversion of the idea of liberation. A critical treatment of this relatively little known and rarely considered revolution will therefore require reflecting upon the interdependence of history and historiography.

1. *The events*. – The revolutionary period in St.-Domingue can only be understood in the context of four overlapping conflicts: the local and international conflicts over the slave trade and slavery, the conflicts between the slaves and the free so-called "mulattoes" in St.-Domingue, the French Revolution, and the competition between the imperial powers, in particular England and France.

When the French Revolution broke out in 1789, St.-Domingue was the most profitable colony in the Western hemisphere. Much of the wealth of the Atlantic seaports came from the sugar plantations in the West Indian colonies. France's trade with the colonies amounted to 600 million francs, and two thirds of this came from the trade with St.-Domingue. (England's trade with its colonies amounted to 450 million.) From 1764 to 1791, the slave popula-

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_022
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

tion in St.-Domingue grew from 206 to 480 thousand, while sugar production increased by about 30%. Society in the colony was deeply divided: on one side stood the white population (about 8% of the total population in 1791), divided into *grands blancs* (mainly plantation owners) and *petit blancs* (shopkeepers, craftspeople, etc.), who mostly lived in the cities; on the other side the slaves (about 87%), the vast majority of whom worked on the plantations; and between them the *affranchis*, i.e. free "mulattoes" and a handful of emancipated slaves of purely African origin.

The issue of the *affranchis* was the fulcrum point that turned the colonial society on its head: although the free "mulattoes", who were often themselves plantation owners and also slaveholders (according to some calculations, they owned a third of the cultivated land), were only a small part of the population, they illustrated the de facto limits of the revolutionary claim to universality and the unresolved issues regarding the relationship of "race", skin colour and social class. When the Estates General were convened in Paris in 1789, St.-Domingue had sent 31 delegates. The abolitionist club *Amis des Noirs*, which aimed to limit the influence of the slaveholders, successfully argued that the delegates by no means represented the free and enslaved "coloured" population and that St.-Domingue was therefore only entitled to six representatives. However, after the fall of the Bastille and the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen in August 1789, the "mulattoes" made their voices heard and demanded full civil rights: there could be slaves, but not two classes of free citizens based on skin colour. However, manoeuvres by the *grand blancs* in the assembly prevented a final decision on equal rights for the "mulattoes". In the Caribbean colonies, where a civil war had already almost erupted between royalist *grands blancs* and republican *petits blancs*, the "mulatto issue" now exploded.

In October 1790, Vincent **Ogé**, a "mulatto" who had headed the failed attempts to secure equal rights for "mulattoes" in Paris, returns to St.-Domingue. He makes no secret of his plans: he intends to achieve equal rights, by force of arms if necessary. At the same time, he makes clear that these equal rights would not extend to slaves. His tactic fails. The conspirators are publicly tortured and broken on the wheel. When the reports of Ogé's death arrive in Paris, the revolutionary masses now take the side of the "mulattoes". In any case, an escalation of the conflict is no longer avoidable in St.-Domingue itself.

Although the *affranchis* continued to reject a coalition with the slaves, the conflicts between the "mulattoes" and the whites not only weakened the position of the slaveholders but also spread revolutionary ideas among the slaves. In France, it was said, the slaves have disposed of their masters. The syncretic Vodou religion, in which elements of African and Christian origin had been

combined, became an important medium for articulating the new concept of liberation and ultimately also the resistance itself.

The first large slave rebellion takes place in 1791 under the leadership of **Boukman**, a Vodou priest. The slaveholders and torturers of the Ancien Régime have established a culture of cruelty that now forms the basis of a war in which rebels and rulers outdo each other in brutality. The French commissioner and Jacobin Léger-Félicité **Sonthonax** allies himself with the "mulattoes" against the white royalists, with the aim of turning St.-Domingue into a republican outpost. At the same time, Toussaint **Louverture**, a former slave who has acquired a certain degree of knowledge in his relatively privileged position as the herder and homoeopath of the plantation, understands both Creole and French, and has read the writings of the abolitionist Abbé **Raynal**, among others, assumes leadership of the slaves and starts to slowly mould the rebels into an organised army. There is only one solution for **Louverture**: Freedom for all.

In February 1794, at the peak of revolutionary zeal in Paris, the National Assembly declares slavery abolished, and **Louverture**, who had fought against France on the Spanish side for some time, goes over to the French and rises through the army ranks. As a loyal French officer, he makes a crucial contribution to thwarting the English attempt to seize the colony.

In 1799, a bloody civil war breaks out between **Louverture**'s faction and the faction of the "mulattoes", which ends with Louverture subjugating the "mulattoes" and their leader **Rigaud** fleeing to France. Fearing that Spanish Santo Domingo might serve as a base for invading St.-Domingue, **Louverture** occupies the eastern part of the island and abolishes slavery there, too. He is now at the height of his power. In 1801, without first consulting **Napoleon**, he issues a new constitution for all of Hispaniola, in which he declares slavery and racial discrimination illegal and appoints himself Governor General for life. The constitution does not, however, contain a declaration of independence, presumably because **Louverture** is convinced that the reintroduction of slavery can only be prevented by skilfully taking advantage of the conflicts between the European powers and that revolutionary France is ultimately the best guarantor of freedom. By this time, two thirds of the whites have either fled or been killed in the wars and civil wars. A quarter of the "mulattoes" and free blacks and a third of the nearly 500 thousand black slaves have died. The plantations are destroyed, and gangs maraud through the countryside. But Louverture's plans for rebuilding the plantation economy are thwarted by the developments in France.

After the fall of **Robespierre**, the influence of reactionary groups (among them the plantation owners) grew, and the possible reintroduction of slavery loomed on the horizon. **Napoleon**, who in any case did not hold the "gil-

ded negroes" in high regard, tried to consolidate the western empire, free St.-Domingue from **Louverture**, and reintroduce slavery.

In January 1802, the French troops arrived in St.-Domingue under the command of **Napoleon**'s son-in-law, General **Leclerc**. **Louverture** imposed a scorched earth strategy: as soon as French troops appeared, his soldiers destroyed houses, fields, food reserves, and then retreated into the hinterland. Although the French managed to apprehend Louverture and deport him to France with his family, where he soon died in prison, their successes were short-lived. **Leclerc** had planned a war of extermination, and after he died of the rampant yellow fever, his successor Jean **Rochambeau** carried out this plan. The rebelling blacks, now under the leadership of Jean-Jacques **Dessalines**, responded in kind.

After two years of war, St.-Domingue lies in ruins. Of the 35 thousand soldiers that **Napoleon** sent forth, only seven thousand return to France. On 1 January 1804, the rebelling generals declare independence from France and replace the name St.-Domingue with the Amerindian name Haiti (land of mountains). On 22 September 1804, **Dessalines** is proclaimed Emperor of Haiti. In early 1805, he orders the whites who are still in the country, in particular the French, to be murdered. The first constitutions of the new state prohibit not only slavery but also any land ownership by whites; the citizens of the country, including the naturalised Germans and Poles, are defined as black. All people of African and Amerindian descent are guaranteed freedom once they set foot on Haitian soil.

Over the course of the 19th cent., Haiti is again and again rocked by civil wars, uprisings, and coups, which can be traced back not only to the quasi-institutionalisation of a policy of violence by the colonial rule but also to the fact that during the long years of war and civil war a military establishment has formed from the ranks of the former black slaves, while the "mulattoes" and the former *affranchis* continue to constitute a strong Francophile economic and social elite. The resulting tensions become particularly volatile because the revolution has led to the collapse of the plantation economy and a return to subsistence farming, and thus to the extreme impoverishment of the state. The bulk of the population soon learned that little is to be expected from the postcolonial Haitian state.

2. *History and historiography*. – The reasons for the HR being relatively unknown outside the Caribbean are complex, and it is often impossible to discern whether this lack of knowledge is an expression of a Eurocentric, imperialist, and/or racist historiography, whether it results from a strategic suppression of information, or whether the events in Haiti cannot be adequately understood due to a theoretical deficiency.

From the very first rebellions, the events in St.-Domingue were subject to a news blackout. Regulations were enacted throughout the entire plantation zone, from Baltimore to Havana and Bahia in Brazil, in order to prevent the local slaves from learning about the events: the import of slaves from St.-Domingue was prohibited, and French emigrants were often forbidden to give account of the events. If word got out despite this blackout, the reports tended to downplay and trivialise the events (**Trouillot** 1995).

This does not mean that the events remained entirely unknown. There is indeed evidence to show that the names and deeds of the Haitian revolutionaries circulated in the "Black Atlantic" via rumours, orally transmitted songs, and even drawings and portraits. However, in the political and cultural efforts of the white Creoles the events were usually not mentioned. That there was a strong fear of the revolution spreading is understandable, particularly if one takes into account that to a certain degree, the Haitian liberation movement reflected the transnational character of the slave trade and of the culture of the Black Atlantic that was gradually crystallising.

The internationalist aspect of the revolutionary movement against slavery (**Kossok** 2000; **Zeuske** 1991) did not escape the notice of the slaveholders in the plantation zone. Beginning in 1805, most Haitian constitutions have contained a provision which prohibits Haiti from meddling in the affairs of other countries. Even years after the end of the revolution, the isolation of the new state remained largely unchanged: Haiti was the only state not invited to the Pan-American Conference in Panama in 1826, and the USA refused diplomatic recognition until 1863. The French recognition (1825) had to be paid for dearly with exorbitant reparations that caused the island's economical disadvantages for decades to come.

The HR poses a challenge for a Eurocentric historiography. In an ideological tradition that can be traced back to the abolitionist **Clarkson**, the problem of slavery has been treated as a social, moral, and religious problem for whites. An abolitionism associated with a political revolution (**Blackburn** 1988) hardly fits into a picture that can only imagine blacks as recipients of white charity (and for this reason it is not particularly surprising that for instance the English anti-slavery movement often also campaigned for the colonisation of Africa).

For liberal models of emancipation, slavery served mainly as a rhetorical foil to one's own struggles for freedom, as is illustrated in particular by the US-American revolution, but also by the independence movements in Spanish Latin America. The term was used emphatically as a metaphor for colonialism, without implying a personal sense of responsibility for abolishing the institution of slavery itself. Whereas independence is considered a legitimate political project, slavery appears as "merely" a moral and economic problem. That slaves

themselves could be political actors seems unthinkable. Liberal historiography in the US thus often insists that slavery was merely an "inconsistency" in bourgeois emancipatory thought and that its abolition is due to consistent application of constitutional principles: by a "deepening" of the ideas of a constitution based on individual rights, the "metaphor" of slavery is ultimately "extended" to slaves. Neither the possibility that the institution of slavery itself could have influenced the specific formation of the institutions, nor the possibility that liberty may not be conceivable as linear progress is usually considered (cf. e.g. **Bailyn** 1967; on the other hand **Davis** 1975).

What is perhaps more surprising is that in France itself the HR is rarely mentioned and has not found its way into the founding myth of the nation at all. François **Furet**'s and Mona **Ozouf**'s monumental *Dictionnaire critique de la Révolution française*, published on the occasion of its 200-year celebrations, does not have an entry on Haiti and slavery. The reasons for the lack of interest in France are complex. An important aspect presumably lies in the fact that Haiti's history indicates contradictions in the French Revolution that run counter to the national myth. Despite all the rhetoric of liberty, abolitionism was confined to a relatively small radical group. The example of Haiti illustrates that the conjunction of nationalism and emancipatory thought in the French Revolution was by no means unproblematic and that liberty in France did not necessarily translate into liberty in the Caribbean: Universality was limited also geopolitically. (The dual role of a French revolutionary like Victor **Hugues** in abolishing and then reintroducing slavery in the Caribbean is indicative of these contradictions.) Ironically, the inverse of this nationalist silencing of the revolution can be found in Haiti itself, where the tradition of an epically hero-ising historiography has hindered more than fostered an understanding of the events (**Trouillot** 1995).

For studies with a Marxist orientation, the HR raises important questions. On the one hand, the relationship between revolutionary concepts of emancipation and traditional forms of resistance must be rethought. Added to that is the issue of the long-contested relationship between slavery and capitalism: Was the abolition of slavery a by-product of capitalist rationalisation, as Eric **Williams** (1944) claimed? But then what is the significance of revolutionary movements against this institution? Eugene D. **Genovese** has argued that the transition from pre-capitalist to capitalist forms of economy is reflected in the history of slave rebellions: whereas the rebellions prior to 1791 sought a return to traditional African forms of life and subsistence farming, the rebellions since 1791 have belonged to the modern bourgeois-revolutionary tradition. This thesis has rightly been opposed on the grounds that it assumes too clear a separation between restorative traditional and "bourgeois-revolutionary" forms of resist-

ance and does not sufficiently take into account that African and syncretic popular practices also played a key role in Haiti (**Fick** 1990). A further difficulty stems from the fact that class conflicts in Haiti are inextricably bound up with antagonisms which arise from racial discrimination and colonial rule and which came to the fore in radical political thought in Europe only in the 20th cent. The Négritude movement insisted that, while the French Revolution was one of the triggering factors, the revolution followed its own principles and had its own goals, and that one cannot therefore by any means speak of the 'French Revolution in the Caribbean' (**Césaire** 1960 and 1963). Thus, it remains difficult to theoretically and concretely historically capture the relation between the goal of national self-determination and other emancipatory goals, such as the liberation from racist oppression, and the analysis of the relationship between emancipatory movements in the metropole and in the so-called periphery has by far not received the attention it deserves (**Gauthier** 1992). While Cyril L.R. **James**'s *The Black Jacobins* (1938) remains an unsurpassed account of the events of the HR, one of his book's problematic aspects is that, presumably because he saw the HR as a lesson for the African anti-colonial movement, he had a strong tendency to treat colonialism and slavery as one and the same. Against James, one might point out that the struggle for national self-determination and the struggle against slavery may have been inseparable in practice, but theoretically they do not lie on the same level, and that the most radical (and, from the standpoint of the colonial rulers and plantation owners, most threatening) aspect of the revolution should perhaps be located in the suppressed internationalist approaches and in the fact that the possibility of a transnational emancipatory/revolutionary diaspora culture became visible in the context of the HR, which someone like Simón **Bolívar** both made use of and feared.

Sibylle Fischer
Translated by Felix Pahl

Bibliography

B. **Bailyn**, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*, Cambridge (MA) 1967.

R. **Blackburn**, *The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery 1776–1848*, London 1988.

A. **Césaire**, *Toussaint Louverture: La Révolution française et le problème colonial*, Paris 1960.

A. **Césaire**, *La tragédie du Roi Christophe*, Paris 1963.

D.B. **Davis**, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution 1770–1823*, Ithaca 1975.

C.E. **Fick**, *The Making of Haiti: The Saint Domingue Revolution from Below*, Knoxville 1990.

F. **Furet**, M. **Ozouf**, *Dictionnaire critique de la Révolution française*, Paris 1988.

D.B. **Gaspar**, D.P. **Geggus** (eds.), *A Turbulent Time: The French Revolution and the Greater Caribbean*, Bloomington 1997.

F. **Gauthier**, *Triomphe et mort du droit naturel en Révolution: 1789 – 1795 – 1802*, Paris 1992.

E.D. **Genovese**, *From Rebellion to Revolution: Afro-American Slave Revolts in the Making of the Modern World*, Baton Rouge 1979.

C.L.R. **James**, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint Louverture and the San Domingo Revolution*, London 1938.

G. **Kahle** et al. (eds.), *Jahrbuch für Geschichte von Staat, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Lateinamerikas*, 1991, vol. 28 (special vol. on the HR).

M. **Kossok**, *Ausgewählte Schriften*, ed. M. Middell et al., 3 vols., Leipzig 2000.

T. **Madiou**, *Histoire d'Haiti*, 4 vols., Port-au-Prince 1847–1904, new edn., 1987 et sqq.

D. **Nicholls**, *From Dessalines to Duvalier: Race, Colour and National Independence in Haiti*, 3rd rev. edn., New Brunswick 1996.

K. **Schüller**, *Die deutsche Rezeption haitianischer Geschichte in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Cologne 1992.

M.-R. **Trouillot**, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, Boston 1995.

E. **Williams**, *Capitalism and Slavery*, Chapel Hill 1944.

M. **Zeuske**, 'Die vergessene Revolution: Haiti und Deutschland in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts', Kahle 1991, 285–326.

→ African mode of production, anti-colonialism, class struggle, colonialism, Cuban Revolution, decolonisation, emancipation, English Revolution, Eurocentrism, freedom/liberty, French Revolution, history, insurrection/uprising, liberation, nationalism, race and class, racism, revolution, slavery/slave mode of production, subalternity, theory of revolution, universalism, violence/power

→ afrikanische Produktionsweise, Antikolonialismus, Aufstand, Befreiung, Emanzipation, englische Revolution, Entkolonisierung, Eurozentrismus, Französische Revolution, Freiheit, Geschichte, Gewalt, Klassenkampf, Kolonialismus, Kubanische Revolution, Nationalismus, Rasse und Klasse, Rassismus, Revolution, Revolutionstheorie, Sklaverei/Sklavenhaltergesellschaft, Subalternität, Universalismus

CHAPTER 22

Hegemonic Apparatus

A: ʾadā al-haymana. – F: appareil d'hégémonie. – G: Hegemonialapparat. – R: aparat gegemonii. – S: aparato hegemónico. – C: bàquán zhuāngzhì, bàquán jīqì, lǐngdǎo jīgòu 霸权装置, 霸权机器, 领导机构

Gramsci uses the concept *apparato egemonico* or *apparato di egemonia* to analyse the social terrain on which "leadership" is contested. Introduced in the context of the defeat of the Italian workers' movement by Fascism, the beginnings of Stalinisation in the Soviet Union and the restructuring of capitalism by the Fordist mode of production and way of life, the concept investigates the role persuasion (rather than the use of violence or the threat thereof) plays in different forms and dimensions of the rule or seizure of power by the oppressed classes: 'A HA can be defined as any institution, place, or agent that organises, mediates, and guarantees the hegemony of a class over other classes' (**Francioni** 1984, 175). The increasing relevance of HAs can, despite the achievements of civil society, be manifested in the fact that the degree of subalternity of the "many" in relation to the "few" can continue to grow. **Gramsci** constructs his "philosophy of praxis" as a project of overcoming precisely this condition of subalternity. The installation of a HA is equivalent to a 'philosophical reform': insofar as it 'creates a new ideological terrain, it effects a reform of consciousnesses and of methods of acquiring and consolidating knowledge, it is a fact of knowledge, a philosophical fact' (*Q* 10, §12).

1. The etymology of "apparatus" poses an initial difficulty of the reception of the notion of a HA. In Latin, *apparatus* means formulation, preparation, decoration, pomp, military or liturgical accoutrement, as well as equipment. Over the course of the 18th cent., the German meaning of the term was extended to denote the totality of people and arrangements required to carry out certain tasks (Etymol WB 1, 65). While the implications of "formulation" and "assembly" (from the verb *appare*), "decoration", "ornament" as well as "pomp" or "display" are still present in the Romance languages, the notion of "equipment" is dominant in German, which explains the tendency to understand the Italian "apparatus" one-sidedly as "machine". This glosses over the active or sensory aspects of the term (e.g. as expressed in "fascination"). The practical implications of the term should also not be overlooked. "Hegemony", for example, is used by **Thucydides** in numerous passages in his *History* to characterise political and

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_023
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

military leadership or power. When the concept was used by the Russian Marxists of the Second International at the end of the 19th cent., or later by the Comintern, it also was used to discuss questions of political strategy (cf. **Anderson** 1977, 15 et sqq.).

2. **Marx** and **Engels** use "state machine" and "state machinery", not "state apparatus". However, the perspective is both genealogical and structural. 'The state machine has consolidated its position against civil society' (MECW 11/186; transl. corr. [MEW 8/197]), **Marx** claims in *18.B*: 'the first French Revolution, with its task of breaking all separate local, territorial, urban and provincial powers in order to create the civil unity of the nation, was bound to develop what the absolute monarchy had begun: the centralisation, but at the same time the extent, the attributes and the agents of governmental power' (185 [ibid.]). After **Napoleon** had perfected this 'state machinery', the régimes that followed added a 'greater division of labour': 'Every *common* interest was straightway severed from society, counterposed to it as a higher, *general* interest, snatched from the activity of society's members themselves and made an object of government activity [...]. All revolutions perfected this machine instead of breaking it. The parties that contended in turn for domination regarded the possession of this huge state edifice as the principal spoils of the victor' (186 [ibid.]; cf. MECW 22/485, 532–7 [MEW 17/139, 591–7]).

The revolutionary counter-position to this is that taken up by the Paris Commune: 'While the merely repressive organs of the old governmental power were to be amputated, its legitimate functions were to be wrested from an authority usurping pre-eminence over society itself, and restored to the responsible agents of society' (*Civil War*, MECW 22/333 [MEW 17/340]; cf. **Engels**, MECW 27/179 [MEW 22/197]).

Marx and **Engels** had already pointed out which dimension was relevant for hegemony in the *GI*: from the 'contradiction between the particular and the common interests, the common interest' in class-societies 'assumes an independent form as the state, which is divorced from the real individual and collective interests' (MECW 5/46 [MEW 3/33]). It is 'the *practical* struggle' of these latter interests as well as 'particular interests' that run counter to these 'common and illusory common interests' that necessitate '*practical* intervention and restraint by the illusory "general" interest in the form of the state' (47 [34]). The state-shaped articulation of society as an 'illusory community' (46 [33]) means that 'each new class which puts itself in the place of one ruling before it is compelled [...] to present its interest as the common interest of all the members of society, that is, expressed in ideal form: it has to give its ideas the form of universality, and present them as the only rational, universally valid

ones' (60 [47]). These passages indicate the level and "grammar" which characterise the struggle for hegemony.

In 1895, **Engels** drew attention to the ways in which the conditions for the struggle for power had changed, and his comments prefigured **Gramsci**'s theory of the war of position: 'far from winning victory by one mighty stroke, [the proletariat] has slowly to press forward from position to position in a hard, tenacious struggle' (*Introduction* to **Marx**, *Class Struggles*, MECW 27/512 [MEW 22/515]). He uses the example of the right to vote to refer to an 'entirely new mode of struggle of the proletariat', which was becoming effective and would be developed further. 'The state institutions, in which the rule of the bourgeoisie is organised, offer the working class still further levers to fight these very state institutions' (516 [519]). 'The time of surprise attacks, of revolutions carried through by small conscious minorities at the head of masses lacking consciousness is past'. Instead, the masses 'themselves must take part in' a complete transformation of the social organisation, 'they must already have grasped what is at stake and what they are fighting for' (520 [523]; cf. **Texier** 1998, 169–224).

3. **Lenin** sees the task as consisting of making the masses capable of an 'independent involvement in the historical destiny of the country' and of liberating them from the 'hegemony of the bourgeoisie' (CW 17/238 et sq.). This can be achieved only by forming a bloc of all 'intermediary democratic groups and sections' around the working class (215), which is active in 'criticising the narrowness and shortsightedness of all bourgeois democracy' (80). In *State and Revolution*, he refers to **Marx**'s views in *18.B* and states: 'all previous revolutions perfected the state machine, whereas it must be broken, smashed' (CW 25/411).

Taking account of his experiences of the revolution, in 1921 **Lenin** affirms that indeed 'quite a small party is sufficient to lead the masses [...]. But to win, we must have the sympathy of the masses' (*Speech in Defence of the Tactics of the Communist International* at the III Congress, CW 32/476). In his late work, he attempted to translate this idea into practical politics: power is not to be wielded *for* the proletariat, but rather *by* it. In the first great crisis of Soviet Russia in 1920/21, he developed the concept of the 'realisation of the dictatorship of the proletariat', in which the party works together closely with the soviets, state-apparatus and the unions as 'transmission belts'. The party should use different methods to approach the masses, win them over, and connect with them (21). Attempts to advance along this path preoccupied him until his death. Even though his approach is filled with educationalist elements and calls for a party that was also the administrative leader, it also contains new forms of exerting influence. For Lenin, the dictatorship of the proletariat contains 'systematically

guiding *influence* (also = struggle, though of a particular type, overcoming of a determinate completely different opposition and a completely different type of overcoming) on *all* workers outside the proletariat' (Lenin 1970, 242). The mechanical aspect to this approach, as expressed in the metaphor of 'transmission belts', benefited **Stalin**'s simplifications (Wks 8, 34), which did away with any nuanced approach to the hegemonic dimension of the struggle for power.

4. Even before the *PN*, **Gramsci** uses the expression 'apparatus' in different contexts such as 'economic apparatus', 'political apparatus', 'union apparatus', 'national apparatus of production', 'apparatus of industrial production', 'proletarian apparatus' or 'military-bureaucratic apparatus'. On the other hand, the term 'hegemony' appears rarely before 1925, and when it does, it usually functions as a descriptive concept. Before Gramsci – under the influence of the Comintern – appropriated the term to lend it the sense of a strategy, he spoke instead of 'prestige' – a phrase which was inspired by his study of linguistics: linguistic geography associated the adoption of a certain way of speaking with a superior culture and social life (cf. **Lo Piparo** 1979, 85–151). In 'The Party and the Revolution' (*ON*, 27 December 1919) he demanded that by means of 'radiation of prestige' (1977, 143) the PSI should 'produce an embryonic apparatus of power in which the masses exercise their own government' (*ON* 2, 369 et sq.; 1977, 144): through the 'apparatus of spiritual government [governo spirituale]' the party 'exercises the most effective of dictatorships, a dictatorship based on prestige' (1977, 144). The only document that seems to indicate that "apparatus" and "hegemony" have an integral relation to each other appears to be in the article 'Towards the Communist International' (*ON*, 26 July 1919), where **Gramsci** refers to the 'enormous administrative and political apparatus' of the Triple Entente, which had survived the war undamaged and is 'now effectively the instrument of Anglo-Saxon world hegemony' (*ON* 2, 152; 1977, 81).

4.1 The concept *apparato egemonico* appears in the *PN* for the first time in the context of describing the conditions which allowed *Action Française* to emerge and to have an impact. After the First World War, 'the HA cracks and the exercise of hegemony becomes evermore difficult', **Gramsci** notes in this context (*Q* 1, § 48; cf. *Q* 13, § 37). This problem is not specifically French: in Italy, 'the discussion of force and consent' is 'relatively advanced'. 'This discussion is the discussion of the "philosophy of the epoch", the central motive in the life of the states in the period after the war. How to reconstruct the HA of the dominant group, which had broken up due to the consequences of the war in all the states of the world?' (*Q* 7, § 80). Gramsci criticises those perspectives which attribute the cause of this apparatus's disintegration to the fact that 'a strong antagon-

istic collective political will had developed'. 'If this were the case', he says, 'the question would have been resolved in the favour of this antagonist'. Instead, he sees numerous causes at work: '1) because great masses, previously passive, have entered into movement, but in a chaotic and disordered movement, without leadership, that is, without precise collective political will; 2) because middle classes that during the war had functions of commanding and responsibility, had them taken away with peace, remaining unemployed, precisely after having done an apprenticeship in commanding, etc.; 3) because the antagonistic force were unable to organise this effective disorder'. The problem consists in reconstructing the 'HA of these previously passive and apolitical elements', something which could not be achieved without force: 'since in every state the ensemble of social relations was different, the political methods of using force and the combination of legal and illegal forces had to be different' (ibid.).

4.2 These contemporary analyses are later supplemented with theoretical considerations on the historical role of HAS. **Gramsci** takes up the 'affirmation of **Guicciardini** that two things are absolutely necessary for the life of a state: weapons and religion'. This formula can be translated in 'various other formulae, less drastic: force and consent, coercion and persuasion, state and church, political society and civil society, politics and morality (**Croce**'s ethical-political history), right and freedom, order and discipline, or, with an implicit judgement of a libertarian flavour, violence and fraud'. For the political thought of the Renaissance, 'religion was consent and the church was civil society, the apparatus of hegemony of the leading group which did not have its own apparatus, that it did not have its own cultural and intellectual organisation, but felt the universal ecclesiastical organisation to be this'. This expresses the idea that 'religion is openly conceived and analysed as an "instrumentum regni" [instrument of domination]'. With this perspective in mind, the Jacobin cult of the "supreme Being" could also be re-examined as an 'attempt to create identity between the state and civil society' and 'to grasp the entire popular and national life' (*Q* 6, § 87).

In the work of Daniel **Halévy**, **Gramsci** finds proof that the most important initiatives in France after 1870 did not emerge from political organisms that were based on the right to vote, but rather from private organisms or relatively unknown high bureaucratic offices. From this he concludes 'that the common concept of the State is unilateral and leads to enormous errors', because 'by State one must understand not only the apparatus of government, but also the "private" apparatus of "hegemony" or civil society' (*Q* 6, § 137). He develops this idea further in relation to 'the problem of political leadership in the formation and in the development of the nation and the modern State in Italy' (*Q* 19, § 24),

ascribing an important role to the intellectuals. The moderates were able 'to stabilise the apparatus (the mechanism) of their intellectual, moral and political hegemony' by making 'individual, "molecular", "private" initiative' into their most important instrument and not, for example, 'a party programme according to a plan elaborated and constituted prior to practical and organisational action' (ibid.). However, this was only possible because the moderates were the organic intellectuals of the upper classes: 'they were intellectuals and political organisers and at the same time bosses, large landowners or bailiffs, commercial and industrial entrepreneurs' (ibid.).

Nevertheless, 'nobody is unorganised and without a party [...], if we understand organisation and party in the broadest and not formal sense. In this multiplicity of particular societies [...] one or more prevail relatively or absolutely, constituting the HA of a social group over the rest of the population (or civil society), basis of the State comprehended strictly as governmental-coercive apparatus' (*Q* 6, § 136). As concerns the weak points in this political hegemony, 'it is to be noted how in the public sphere the improprieties of the administration of justice make an especially disastrous impression: the HA is most sensitive in this sector, to which the arbitrary acts of the police and the political administration can also be referred' (*Q* 6, § 81).

Sometimes, the concept is only present in substance, not in wording. For example, **Gramsci** speaks of the 'material structure of the superstructure' (*Q* 4, § 12; *Q* 11, § 29), of the 'complex of trenches and defences' or of the 'ideological structure of a ruling class', of the 'material organisation intended to maintain, to defend and to develop the theoretical or ideological "front"'. The most important elements for this endeavour are the press and the publishing houses. Additionally, there is 'all that which influences or can influence public opinion directly or indirectly: the libraries, the schools, circles and clubs of various types, to architecture, the placement of streets and the names of them. The maintained position of the Church in modern society cannot be explained if one doesn't recognise the daily and patient efforts that it makes in order to develop continually its particular section of this material structure of ideology' (*Q* 3, § 49). **Francioni** finds it 'probable that the concept of the material structure of ideology, correlative to that of the HA, represents for **Gramsci** merely an early and provisional formulation, a perhaps not entirely satisfying draft, particularly when the note only had one development and was not taken up again in a thematic notebook' (1984, 179).

4.3 The Hegelian concept of an ethical or cultural state, as it was propagated by **Croce**, can also be more clearly comprehended with the concept of HA: 'every State is ethical insofar as one of its most important functions is that of elevat-

ing the large mass of the population to a determinate cultural and moral level. […] The school as positive educative function and the courts as repressive and negative educative function are the most important activities of the State in this sense: but in reality a multiplicity of other so called private initiatives and activities, which form the apparatus of political and cultural hegemony of the dominant classes, aim at this end'. If, for **Hegel**, 'the development of the bourgeoisie in its expansion' could appear to be 'unlimited', 'in reality only the social group that posits the end of the State and of itself as the goal to be reached can create an ethical State' (*Q* 8, § 179).

5. Similar approaches, even if less radical, can be found in the Austro-Marxists, who attempted to theorise the hegemony of the working class in the same period (cf. **Albers** 1983, 19–50). Thus, in the *Linz Programme*, we read: 'in the democratic republic, political domination is based no longer on political privileges, but on the ability, by means of its *economic power*, the power of *tradition*, the *press*, the *school* and the *church*, to keep the majority of the people *under its intellectual-cultural* [*geistig*] *influence*' (**Bauer**, WA 3, 1022).

Such considerations became relevant once again in the 1960s. In particular, the student movement and the experiences of the democratic-socialist government in Chile in 1970–73 with its bloody defeat by the military coup posed the question concerning the possibilities of a left-hegemonic project once again. In this context, Christine **Buci-Glucksmann** directed attention to **Gramsci**'s concept of HA, which is a 'concept of the same order as those of organic intellectual and historic bloc'. The lack of attention paid to this concept created a 'number of negative effects': 'the primacy of the ideological over the analysis of the superstructures, the primacy of the problematic of the historical bloc over that of the relations of force and the state, a deviation in Gramscian interpretation of a cultural-idealist character' (63). **Buci-Glucksmann** connects the concept of HA to **Althusser**'s 'ideological state apparatuses' (ISA).

Althusser mentions **Gramsci**'s influence on his own theory: 'Gramsci […] had the "remarkable" idea that the State could not be reduced to the (Repressive) State Apparatus, but included, as he put it, a certain number of institutions from "*civil society*" ("societas civilis"): the Church, the schools, the trade unions, etc.' (**Althusser** 1971, 142). **Gramsci** had 'not systematised' his 'acute but fragmentary notes' and 'intuitions' (ibid.), something which **Althusser** intends to amend. 'No class can hold state power over a long period without at the same time exercising its hegemony over and in the Ideological State Apparatuses' (146). In distinction to the centrally organised repressive state apparatus, 'the ideological state apparatuses are […] "relatively autonomous" and capable of providing an objective field' for the unfolding of the class struggle (149). The

experience of 1968 prompts Althusser to formulate that the ISAs, of which he considers the schools to be the dominant one, are 'necessarily the location and the actual application of a class struggle, which in the apparatuses of the ruling ideology continues the general class struggle' (1983, 456). He distinguishes between religious, educational, family, juridical, political (political system and parties), 'trade union' (here including both professional and employer associations), informational and cultural ISAs (cf. 143 et sq.).

While **Althusser** views the ISAs as instruments of power for the ruling class, Santiago **Carrillo** places his hopes in depriving 'bourgeois ideology of its hegemony in the ISAs' by means of a comprehensive and vigorous 'democratisation of the state apparatus' (1977, 56). Nicos **Poulantzas** claims that **Gramsci** had explicitly 'developed the theory of the ideological apparatuses as apparatuses of the State' (1974, 299; transl. corr.). The key question for him is that of the 'power bloc', in which he, like Gramsci, distinguishes between classes and class fractions, which have in no way 'merged' on an equal footing: one of these classes or class-fractions plays an unambiguously dominating role (1975, 141). The 'heart of the matter' consists in the distinction between 'the state apparatus, narrowly defined, in the singular [and] several ideological State apparatuses', in the plural (1974, 305). **Poulantzas** criticises **Althusser** for having underestimated the 'distinction between the "private" and "public" state apparatuses' (ibid.). Fixation on the ideological and repressive state-apparatuses threatened to prevent us 'from locating the state network in which the power of the hegemonic fraction of the bourgeoisie is essentially concentrated [...] it obscures the character of the modalities required to transform this economic apparatus in the transition to socialism' (1978, 33).

As in the case of **Poulantzas**, **Althusser**'s influence on regulation-school theorists is also noticeable in that HA does not become an operative concept in their work, even though they attempt to investigate the history and present of the capitalist mode of production as a sequence of historically specific political projects, social confrontations and processes of institutionalisation based upon compromise, and even though regulationist analysis works 'with the concept of hegemony or rather with that of the ideological-institutional hegemonic system' (**Lipietz** 1992, 187; cf. **Demirović** 1992, 133 et sqq.).

Althusser later attempted once more to list the reasons why his concept of the ISA was 'more precise' than '**Gramsci**'s concept of HA' (1978, 12): with the latter, according to **Althusser**, the 'apparatus is defined in terms of its effect or result, hegemony, without mentioning how it functions – "*as ideology*"' (ibid.), while he defined the ISAs 'in terms of their "motor cause": ideology' (2006, 139). **Gramsci** contradicted himself when he conceived the HA as belonging to civil society and distinguished this as the "private" as opposed to the "public" of

the state in the narrow sense; on the other hand, he identified the state with civil society (ibid.). – However, here **Althusser** ignores the difference between bourgeois society and civil society [società civile] just as he fails to notice the difference between the state in the narrow sense and the integral state; he misunderstands the sphere of mediation between the private sphere and state in the narrow sense, which **Gramsci** opened up for Marxist reflection, as being private. Finally, when **Althusser** speaks of "ideology", it must be taken into account that this term has an omnihistorical meaning for him, i.e. it is not readily compatible with a use of language derived from **Marx**.

The lack of distinction between state and civil-society apparatuses in **Althusser**'s work has been repeatedly criticised: as **Hall**, **Lumley**, and **McLennan** argue, **Althusser** 'always insisted on the need for specificity as part of the "necessary complexity" of the Marxist concept of totality. But the opposition to the concept of "civil society" has the theoretical effect, here, precisely of leading us to abandon specificity for a rather too convenient generalization' (1978, 64). Karin **Priester** argues that this makes it impossible to 'distinguish between bourgeois democracy and fascism' (1979, 37). By concentrating on "ideology", there is the additional risk of losing sight of the 'whole organisation of the intellectual "function", i.e. the whole organisation of "technical know-how" and specialist knowledge' in the HA (**De Giovanni** 1979, 69). This type of theoretical perspective based on hegemony would also serve as a generative point of contact with many studies inspired by **Foucault**, since 'there is no way of conceptualizing the balance of power between different regimes of truth without society conceptualized, not as a unity, but as a "formation"' (**Hall** 1986, 48). According to the assessment of the **Projekt Ideologietheorie**, **Althusser** begins from 'the statal, solidified instances that have become autonomous over and against society; he puts himself in the standpoint of the "*accomplished phenomenon*" (MECW 36/218 [MEW 24/218])' (**PIT** 1979, 115). **Gramsci**, on the other hand, was interested in the development of the relations of force in political conjunctures and disputes, and in the active ascension of a class to state-power (**Hall** et al. 1978, 68 et sq.; **PIT** 1979, 111). – Nevertheless, there is a considerable amount of variation in the way different critics of **Althusser** assess the concept of HA. While **Haug**, similarly to **Buci-Glucksmann**, considers it (in the plural form and in the variant of 'hegemoniale Apparate') to be 'indispensable' (1985, 174), the concept is not found in the texts of **Hall**.

It is precisely the specifically **Gramsci**an accent on the non-statalised public sphere that makes the concept of HA useful in the attempt to understand the failure of state-administrative socialism. Its claim to hegemony was increasingly replaced by a repressive system, in which the contest for the "hearts and minds" occurred only formally, as one-sided state-propaganda (cf. **Bollinger**

1998). Here, one could have learnt from **Gramsci** that 'unity and discipline must emerge from loyalty and due to conviction' (*Letter to the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party*, Gramsci 1978, 432).

Stefan Bollinger and Juha Koivisto
Translated by Peter Thomas

Bibliography

D. **Albers**, *Versuch über Otto Bauer und Antonio Gramsci. Zur politischen Theorie des Marxismus*, Berlin/W 1983.

L. **Althusser**, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, transl. B. Brewster, London 1971.

L. **Althusser**, 'Il marxismo come teoria "finita"', L. Althusser et al., *Discutere lo stato*, Bari 1978, 7–21.

L. **Althusser**, 'A Note on the Ideological State Apparatuses', *Economy and Society*, vol. 12, 1983, no. 4, 455–65.

L. **Althusser**, 'Marx in His Limits', *Philosophy of the Encounter*, London 2006.

E. **Altvater**, O. **Kallscheuer** (eds.), *Den Staat diskutieren*, Berlin/W 1979.

P. **Anderson**, 'The Antinomies of Antonio Gramsci', *New Left Review*, I, 100, 1977, 5–78.

O. **Bauer**, *Werkausgabe* (WA), ed. Arbeitsgemeinschaft für die Geschichte der österreichischen Arbeiterbewegung, Vienna 1975–80.

S. **Bollinger**, 'Realsozialismus, Hegemonieapparat und Hegemonieverlust: Gramsci und Ansätze einer kritischen DDR-Geschichtsschreibung', U. Hirschfeld (ed.), *Gramsci-Perspektiven*, Berlin-Hamburg 1998, 118–27.

C. **Buci-Glucksmann**, *Gramsci and the State* (1975), London 1980.

S. **Carrillo**, *'Eurokommunismus' und Staat*, Hamburg 1977.

A. **Demirović**, 'Regulation und Hegemonie: Intellektuelle, Wissenspraktiken und Akkumulation', A. Demirović, H-P. Krebs, T. Sablowski (eds.), *Hegemonie und Staat*, Münster 1992, 128–57.

B. **De Giovanni**, 'Für eine marxistische Theorie des Übergangs', Altvater/Kallscheuer 1979, 66–74.

G. **Francioni**, *L'Officina Gramsciana*, Naples 1984.

A. **Gramsci**, *Ordine nuovo* (*1919–20*) (*ON*), Turin 1954.

A. **Gramsci**, *Quaderni del carcere* (*Q*), ed. V. Gerratana, Rome 1975.

A. **Gramsci**, *Selections from Political Writings 1910–1920*, London 1977.

A. **Gramsci**, *Selections from Political Writings, 1921–1926*, London 1978.

A. **Gramsci**, *L'Ordine Nuovo. 1919–1920* (*ON 2*), ed. V. Gerratana and A. Santucci, Turin 1987.

S. **Hall**, 'On Postmodernism and Articulation: An Interview with Stuart Hall', *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 2, 1986, 45–60.
S. **Hall**, B. **Lumley**, G. **McLennan**, 'Politics and Ideology: Gramsci', Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (ed.), *On Ideology*, London 1978, 45–76.
W.F. **Haug**, *Pluraler Marxismus: Beiträge zur politischen Kultur*, vol. 1, Berlin/W 1985.
B. **Jessop**, *Nicos Poulantzas: Marxist Theory and Political Strategy*, Houndsmills 1985.
W.I. **Lenin**, 'Ein neues Lenindokument – Erste Skizzen und Plan einer Broschüre über die Diktatur des Proletariats', *Sowjetwissenschaft: Gesellschaftswissenschaftliche Beiträge*, Berlin/GDR 1970, vol. 23, 1970, no. 3/4.
A. **Lipietz**, 'Allgemeine und konjunkturelle Merkmale der ökonomischen Staatsintervention', Demirović, Krebs, Sablowski 1992, 182–202.
F. **Lo Piparo**, *Lingua, intellettuali, egemonia in Gramsci*, Rome-Bari 1979.
W. **Pfeiffer**, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Deutschen* (*Etymol WB*), 2 Vols, Berlin/GDR 1989.
N. **Poulantzas**, *Fascism and Dictatorship*, London 1974.
N. **Poulantzas**, *Political Power and Social Classes*, London 1975.
N. **Poulantzas**, *State, Power, Socialism*, London 1978.
K. **Priester**, 'Die Bedeutung von Gramscis "erweitertem" Staatsbegriff', Arbeitskreis Westeuropäische Arbeiterbewegung (ed.), *Eurokommunismus und marxistische Theorie der Politik*, AS 44, Berlin/W 1979, 30–45.
K. **Priester**, *Studien zur Staatstheorie des italienischen Marxismus: Gramsci und Della Volpe*, Frankfurt/M-New York 1981.
Projekt Ideologie-Theorie (PIT), *Theorien über Ideologie*, AS 40, Berlin/W 1979.
J. **Texier**, *Révolution et démocratie chez Marx et Engels*, Paris 1998.

→ Americanism, Austro-Marxism, base, bureaucracy, civil society [società civile], class struggles, coherence, command-administrative socialism, common sense [senso comune], dictatorship of the proletariat, dismantling of the state, dissolution of the state, educationalism, ethical-political, Eurocommunism, good sense [buon senso], grammar, Gramscianism, hegemony, historical bloc, ideology-theory, ideological power, ideological state-apparatus, integral state, intellectual, Paris Commune, party-apparatus, passive revolution, Prison Notebooks, relations of force, Risorgimento, state, state-apparatus, student-movement, subalternity, superstructure, war of position/war of movement

→ Abbau des Staates, Absterben des Staates, Alltagsverstand, Amerikanismus, Austromarxismus, Basis, befehlsadministratives System, Bürokratie, Diktatur des Proletariats, Edukationismus, ethisch-politisch, Eurokommunismus, Gefängnishefte, geschichtlicher Block, gesunder Menschenverstand, Grammatik,

Gramscismus, Hegemonie, Ideologietheorie, ideologische Macht, ideologische Staatsapparate, integraler Staat, Intellektuelle, Klassenkämpfe, Kohärenz, Kräfteverhältnisse, Pariser Kommune, Partei, Parteiapparat, passive Revolution, Risorgimento, Staat, Staatsapparat, Stellungskrieg/Bewegungskrieg, Studentenbewegung, Subalternität, Superstruktur, Zivilgesellschaft

CHAPTER 23

Humanity

A: al-ʾinsānīya. – F: humanité. – G: Menschheit. – R: čelovečestvo. – S: humanidad. – C: rénlèi 人类

"H" is not self-evident, but a task. According to **Marx**, its 'prehistory' will only come to an end once the 'material conditions' have been established for overcoming the 'antagonistic form of the social process of production' (*Pref* 59, MECW 29/263–264 [MEW 13/9]). It is in this sense that H's nascency advances off the back of capitalism, while continually being both constituted and undermined by the global reach of its communication and production technologies. 'Men as a species', wrote Walter **Benjamin** in 1928, 'completed their development thousands of years ago; but mankind as a species is just beginning his' ('To the Planetarium' in *OWStreet*, 104 [GS IV.1, 147]). A humanity that joins together as a subject and acts according to the self-understanding of its interests to transform the earth into a 'homeland' is a utopia to which 'no one has yet been' (**Bloch**, *PH*, vol. 3, 1376 [1628]). Nevertheless, the concept of H initially entered the stage as an imagined unity, functioning as a political-ethical position, as a declarative and evocative invocation, and as such has thus also been vulnerable to antagonistic objections.

The process of becoming human, in its concrete-historical essence, can be found in the 'ensemble of the social relations' (**Marx**, *ThF*, MECW 5/4 [MEW 3/6]) and is based on our '*social nature*' or the '*biological potential for the development of sociability*' (**Holzkamp** 1983, 180). It was in this transition from animal to human that these traits emerged. In order to be able to produce, the human body must be physically organised in a specific way, which, based on the state of primatology and anthropology at that time, **Engels** linked primarily to 'erect gait' (differentiation of the hand from the foot, bipedality), which enabled the development of the articulation of language and the formation of the brain (*DN*, MECW 25/330; cf. 452 [MEW 20/322; cf. 444 et sq.]). The starting point for this was the climate-related recession of forested areas that transformed the rainforest biotope into steppe biotope and resulted in a subset of primates being 'pressured by natural selection to *progress evolutionary towards human*' (**Holzkamp** 1983, 164).

The qualitative leap that heralded the actual becoming of humankind was – paraphrased by Benjamin **Franklin** in his definition of human as a 'tool-making animal' (cf. *C I*, 286 [MEW 23/194]) – a transition from the utilisation and modi-

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_024
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

fication of means to the production of tools (**Holzkamp** 1983, 162 et sq., 172, and 176 et sqq.), which was in turn connected with the emergence of species-specific abilities, such as linguistic communication, the anticipation of future events, and corresponding processes of learning and planning. The 'production of material life' is regarded by **Marx** and **Engels** as the 'first historical act', which indeed, 'today, as thousands of years ago, must daily and hourly be fulfilled merely in order to sustain human life' (*GI*, MECW 5/42 [MEW 3/28]). What is commonly called the "history of H" must therefore 'always be studied and treated in relation with the history of industry and exchange' (43 [30]).

The totality that the concept of H suggests, which *qua* abstracting synthesis makes one out of many, should not be confused with the state in which, as Antonio **Gramsci** says, 'the whole human race *historically* unified in a single unitary cultural system', because this 'process of historical unification takes place through the disappearance of the internal contradictions which tear apart human society, while these contradictions themselves are the condition for the formation of groups and for the birth of ideologies, which are not concretely universal, but are immediately rendered transient by the practical origin of their substance' (*SPN*, 807 et sq. [N. 11, §17, 1411 et sq.]). But what 'the idealists call "spirit" is not a point of departure but a point of arrival, it is the ensemble of superstructures moving towards concrete and objectively universal unification and it is not a unitary presupposition' (808 [1412]). Up to now, this unification, which describes not a theoretical but a practical process, has been best accomplished by 'experimental science' (ibid.) and is the 'terrain on which such a cultural unity of this kind has reached its further extension' (ibid.). Natural science and technology represent for the time being 'the most objectivised and concretely universalised subjectivity' – and not the social sciences (ibid.).

In 1977, NASA sent two gold-plated records into space on interstellar space probes (Voyager 1 and 2). In addition to greetings in various languages, the Voyager Golden Records also contained examples of science, music, and pictures, which were meant to inform possible extraterrestrial life about H. Also included was a message by the UN Secretary-General Kurt **Waldheim**, who, speaking 'on behalf of the people of our planet', said that this step was undertaken in order to foster 'peace and friendship' and to 'teach if we are called upon, to be taught if we are fortunate' (cited in **Sagan** 1978, 26). The unified nations invoked by **Waldheim** still await their unification. However, there is no other future than that unity through which differences can be put to rest. This is why **Picasso**'s painting, which adorns the volumes of this lexicon and breathes that militant confidence wrung from despair, represents in condensed form the *Solidaritätslied* by **Brecht** and **Eisler**: 'Black and white and brown and yellow, /

End the rule of sword and gun! / For when once you raise your voices / All the people shall be one' (**Brecht** 1967, 23 [GA 14, 119]).

Eds.

Bibliography

K. **Holzkamp**, *Grundlegung der Psychologie*, Frankfurt/M-New York 1983.
C. **Sagan** (ed.), *Murmurs of Earth: The Voyager Interstellar Record*, New York 1978.

1. In 20th/21st cent. German, "H" (*Menschheit*) unambiguously refers to the totality of all human beings – albeit understood in qualitatively different ways. In other languages, the word can mean both humankind and, from a somewhat different perspective, being human. This is the case with the English H, French *humanité*, and Spanish *humanidad*. Russian (*čelovečestvo*) and Chinese (*rénlèi*), on the other hand, are the same as German; for humankind, Russian has the terms *gumannost'* and *čelovečnost'*, and Chinese has the terms *rén'ài*, *rénxìng*, and *réndào*. In German, too, the word has long been characterised by its ambiguity. Jacob and Wilhelm **Grimm** derived it from the Old High German word '*mannischheit*' as 1. 'kind, characteristic, essence of a human being'; 2. 'totality of human beings'; 3. 'in a narrower sense, a spatially connected and related number of humans'; 4. 'finally, also an individual human being according to his or her nature, his or her kind' (1885, vol. VI, col. 2077 et sqq.). In the sense of humans' 'kind' or 'essence', the word is expressed in contrast to God and animals.

The multifaceted meaning of the term contributed to its militant deployment, especially in the French and German Enlightenment where it helped to establish a new conception of humanity and a new order. The fundamental equality of all humans articulated by the concept of H was enough to bring it into conflict with the feudal order and was furthermore understood as an obligation to fight that order and its injustice. Johann Gottlieb **Fichte** thus argued that the French Revolution was important 'for the whole of H' as a 'rich painting on the great text of human rights and human value' (1793/1973, 3; cf. **Markov** 1982, vol. 1, 230). As early as 1785, the French call for 'liberty, equality, fraternity' could also be heard in the poem Friedrich **Schiller** dedicated to the Freemasons, *Ode To Joy*: Let be 'reunited / what the sword of custom cleft / beggars become princes' brothers' (first stanza). The later version of these lines, from Ludwig **van Beethoven**'s 9th Symphony in 1824, took on a universalist spirit that resonated around the world: 'all men shall become brothers'.

1.1 The link between acknowledging the equality of all human beings and the obligation to also realise it in society had already emerged in the social struggles of the early modern period. Ernst **Bloch** refers to Thomas **Müntzer**, the 'revolutionary among mystics', who at the beginning of the 16th cent. was able to 'read in the unity of non-scriptural illumination the unity of an Internationale across all separations. Jewish, Turkish, Papist, Lutheran, all this according to Münzer belongs to the letter of the world' (*PH*, vol. 3, 1301 [1537 et sq.]). In one of his *Letters on the Modern Literary Question* from 1759, Gotthold Ephraim **Lessing** discusses the figure of a poor fisherman who, after losing all his worldly possessions in a storm, intends to drown himself but then discovers a shipwreck on the beach. Forgetting his desire to die, he plunders it and is grateful to heaven for having sent the storm – heedless of the fact that 'perhaps a hundred others had lost a hundred times more through the storm [...] than he himself' (1997, 578). 'What effect', the narrator asks, would the discovery of the shipwreck 'have had on him' if the author had given him 'only a spark of H? Should it not have driven his despair even higher?' (Ibid.) This indignation is entirely in keeping with Edme-François **Mallet**'s entry in the *Encyclopédie* on *humanité*, according to which it is 'a feeling of goodwill towards all men' that drives one to 'go through the world with the aim of abolishing slavery, superstition, vice, and misfortune' (1765, vol. VIII, 348).

1.2 On 6 June 1789, even before the storming of the Bastille, the French 'Society of the Friends of the Blacks' wrote a letter to Jacques **Necker**, the Controller General of Finance, demanding in the name of 'humanity' (*humanité*) that the Estates-General outlaw and abolish the slave trade, because it was 'based on robbery, murder, and extortion' and 'can never be anything but cruel and criminal' (cited in **Markov** 1982, vol. 2, 67). This universalism resounded through the Haitian Revolution for independence in 1791. 'The blacks were taking their part in the destruction of European feudalism begun by the French Revolution, and liberty and equality, the slogans of the revolution, meant far more to them than to any French man' (**James** 1938/1963, 198 [1938/1984, 225]). 'At the same time as the French, the half-savage slaves of San Domingo were showing themselves subject to the same historical laws as the advanced workers of revolutionary Paris' (243 [275]).

In *The Metaphysics of Morals*, in which **Kant** affirms the equality of all human beings and the moral obligation that comes with it to make equality a reality, he uses the term H in the sense of being human: the 'H itself is a dignity'; every human being is thus 'under obligation to acknowledge, in a particular way, the dignity of H in every other man' (§ 38, 255 [600 et sq.]). **Hegel** recognises the importance of being aware of a common H such 'that I

am apprehended as a *universal* person, in which [respect] *all* are identical', but he considers this an 'empty abstraction' (*PhRight*, 1991, § 209, 240 [W 7, 360]). It is 'of infinite importance', he continues, implicitly taking up a parallel statement from the theology of **Paul** the Apostle (cf. *Galatians* 3,28), that the '*human being counts as such because he is human being*, not because he is a Jew, Catholic, Protestant, German, Italian, etc.'; this consciousness remains 'inadequate only if it adopts a fixed position – for example, as *cosmopolitanism* – in opposition to the concrete life of the state' (*PhRight*, 240 [360 et sq.]).

2. In 1844, when **Marx** viewed the critique of religion, which he understood as the precondition for all critique, as concluded in Germany, he drew from it the 'teaching that *man is the highest being for man*' and forged from it the '*categorical imperative to overthrow all conditions* in which man is a debased, enslaved, forsaken, despicable being' (*CHPL*, MECW 3/182 [MEW 1/385]). On this, Georg **Lukács** considers H to still possess the 'form of a mere ideal, of a postulate' that it has assumed ever since 'mankind consciously appeared on the horizon of people' (1963/2023, 454); yet, immediately thereafter, **Marx** transformed it step by step from a bourgeois critique into a historical-materialist critique of society. Marx will speak of the 'social H' in his *Theses on Feuerbach*, where he identifies the 'human being [...] in its reality' as an 'ensemble of social relations' (MECW 5/4 et sq. [MEW 3/6 et sq.]). Not as an indeterminate totality of all human beings: as a mere '"species"', an 'inner, mute, general character which unites the many individuals *in a natural way*' (4 [6]), but rather as the product of a historical development that makes individual human beings and peoples into members of a universal society. Marx thus turns 'both against **Feuerbach**'s a-historical reflections on humanity itself and – related to this – against the purely anthropological concept of H as a species' (**Bloch**, *PH*, vol. 1, 306).

2.1 In 1845, **Engels** dedicated *The Condition of the Working Class in England* to workers and linked their struggles to 'the cause of *H*' (MECW 4/301 [MEW 2/231]). He ridiculed the English bourgeoisie for leaving it to '*a foreigner* to inform the civilised world of the degrading situation [the workers] have to live in' and at the same time paid tribute to the fact that 'no working-man in England – nor in France either, by-the-by – ever treated him as a foreigner' (298 [230]). From his observations that these working-men are 'free from that blasting curse, national prejudice and national pride, which after all means nothing but *wholesale selfishness*', he advances a perspective oriented towards H: 'I found you to be more than mere *Englishmen*, members of a single, isolated nation, I found you to be *Men*, members of the great and universal family of H, who know their interest and that of all the human race to be the same', which is also why 'no

step you will have to take in your onward march, will be lost to our common cause, the cause of *H*!' (298 et sq. [230 et sq.]).

In the subsequent text, H also sometimes stands for "being human". **Engels** interprets the situation in which the workers are 'cast out and ignored by the class in power, morally as well as physically and mentally' (411 [342]) primarily as a struggle for the preservation of their H. 'The workers, treated as brutes' are thus faced with the choice of 'actually becom[ing] such; or if they can maintain their consciousness of manhood only by cherishing the most glowing hatred, the most unbroken inward rebellion against the bourgeoisie in power' (411 [343]). "Humaneness" is also found in this conception of H: 'the workman is far more humane in ordinary life than the bourgeois'; for the worker, 'every man is a man, while to the bourgeois the worker is less than a man' (cf. 420 [352]).

2.2 In 1844, **Marx** opposed the liberal view that the question regarding human beings' moral obligation towards one another can be answered with the abstract postulate of human rights. He was concerned with human – rather than "merely" political – emancipation, thereby expanding the horizon of emancipation beyond the nation state. 'In his *most immediate* reality, in civil society, man is a secular being. Here, where he regards himself as a real individual, and is so regarded by others, he is a *fictitious* phenomenon' (*Jewish Question*, MECW 3/154 [MEW 1/355]). In the state, on the other hand, where he is 'regarded as a species-being', he is 'endowed with an unreal universality' (ibid.). 'Only when the real, individual man re-absorbs in himself the abstract citizen, and as an individual human being has become *species-being* in his everyday life, in his particular work, and in his particular situation, only when man has recognised and organised his "*forces propres*" [own powers] as *social* forces, and consequently no longer separates social power for himself in the shape of *political* power, only then will human emancipation have been accomplished' (168 [370]). Here a connection is drawn to 'social H', whose becoming is linked to world history: 'The liberation of each single individual will be accomplished in the measure in which history becomes wholly transformed into world history' (*GI*, MECW 5/51 [MEW 3/37]).

If regarded as a mere totality of human beings – a view **Marx** critically attributed to Pierre-Joseph **Proudhon** in 1847 –, H constitutes only an empty abstraction that obscures social cleavages and conflicts. In that sense, when Proudhon argues that within the 'impersonal reason of H' have slumbered 'economic relations [...] viewed as *immutable laws, eternal principles, ideal categories* [...] since the beginning of time' then there can be 'no history left' (*Poverty*, MECW 6/170 [MEW 4/135]).

To consider 'H *in abstracto*', **Marx** writes in 1857, is just as 'wrong' and 'speculative' as to conceive of 'society as a single subject' (*Intro 57*, MECW 28/31 [MEW 13/625]). Especially when production is conceived "in general", must the 'determinations [...] rather be set apart in order not to allow the unity which stems from the first fact that the subject, H, and the object, nature, are the same – obscure the essential difference' (23 [617]). Just as there is 'no production in general, there is also no general production' (ibid.). It 'is always a *particular* branch of production – e.g., agriculture, cattle-breeding, manufacture, etc. – or it is the *totality*' (ibid.). This brings back the problem of H in its ethical dimensions.

2.3 In its concrete becoming, socialisation is full of disruptive contradictions. According to **Marx** and **Engels** in 1845/46, 'separate individuals have, with the broadening of their activity into world-historical activity, become more and more enslaved under a power alien to them' (MECW 5/51 [MEW 3/37]). In the *Manifesto* of 1848, the process is summed up multiple times. 'The bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian, nations into civilisation' and thereby 'compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production', creating 'a world after its own image' (MECW 6/488 [MEW 4/466]). However, it then says, as threatening as it is promising, that this same bourgeois society, which 'has conjured up such gigantic means of production and of exchange, is like the sorcerer, who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he has called up by his spells' (489 [467]).

The character of this grand promise is, for **Marx** and **Engels**, inseparably linked with the question of the role of the working class. 'The proletarians', it says in the *Manifesto*, 'cannot become masters of the productive forces of society, except by abolishing their own previous mode of appropriation, and thereby also every other previous mode of appropriation'; their 'movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interest of the immense majority'; it cannot 'stir, cannot raise itself up, without the whole superincumbent strata of official society being sprung into the air' (495 [472 et sq.]).

When **Engels** published the second edition of *Condition* in 1892, he admitted in the preface that the work 'exhibits everywhere the traces of the descent of modern socialism from one of its ancestors, German classical philosophy. Thus, great stress is laid on the dictum that communism is not a mere party doctrine of the working class, but a theory compassing the emancipation of society at large, including the capitalist class, from its present narrow condi-

tions' (MECW 27/314 [MEW 22/321]). This was 'true enough in the abstract, but absolutely useless, and sometimes worse, in practice', because 'as long as the wealthy classes not only feel the want of any emancipation, but strenuously oppose the self-emancipation of the working class, so long the social revolution will have to be prepared and fought out by the working class alone' (ibid.). Engels distances himself from 'the very people who, from the "impartiality" of their superior standpoint, preach to the workers a socialism soaring high above their class interests and class struggles'. 'The French bourgeois of 1789, too, declared the emancipation of the bourgeoisie to be the emancipation of the whole human race, but the nobility and the clergy would not see it' (ibid.). Thus, for Engels, it cannot be expected that the bourgeoisie will relinquish its rule merely because the working class holds the interests of H before them.

3. In 1916, faced with the horrors of the First World War, Rosa **Luxemburg** declared: 'The future of civilization and H depends on whether or not the proletariat resolves manfully to throw its revolutionary broadsword into the scales' (*Crisis*, 321 [GW 4, 62]). In 1928, **Benjamin** saw in the 'human multitudes, gases, electric forces [...] hurled into the country, high-frequency currents cours[ing] through the landscape, new constellations [rising] in the sky, aerial space and ocean depths thunder[ing] with propellers, and everywhere sacrificial shafts [...] dug in Mother Earth' that 'technology [had] betrayed H and turned the bridal bed into a bloodbath' (*OWStreet*, 103 [GS IV.1, 147]). In the 'nights of annihilation' of the First World War, 'the frame of H was shaken by a feeling that resembled the bliss of the epileptic. And the revolts that followed it were the first attempt of mankind to bring the new body under its control. The power of the proletariat is the measure of its convalescence. If it is not gripped to the very marrow by the discipline of this power, no pacifist polemics will save it' (104 [148]).

3.1 'The memory of humanity for sufferings borne is astonishingly short', noted **Brecht** after the Second World War, and 'its gift of imagination for coming sufferings is almost even less' (*Congress of the Peoples for Peace*, 1952 [GA 23, 215]). In the final scene of *Fear and Misery of the Third Reich*, a worker imprisoned in a concentration camp writes a letter to his son shortly before his execution. In it he assures him that 'I haven't changed my opinions' because they were not a crime (206 [GA 4, 442]). 'I just served my class', with the aim to 'free H from its oppressors' (ibid.). 'Till that's done life has no other value. Let that out of our sights and the whole H will relapse into barbarism' (ibid.). Brecht shows that the decision of that worker to resist and thus risk one's own existence first arose out of the awareness of the question of H, and consequently

that the class standpoint can only claim political and ethical universality via a concrete human community.

3.2 'The revolution, precisely because it is a revolution, demands all things for all men', explains C.L.R. **James** (1947/1992, 164). 'It is an attempt to leap from the realm of objective necessity to the realm of objective freedom' (ibid.). By aiming at the abolition of class society, the revolution seeks to unite the interest of the working class with that of H.

In this union **Bloch** also sees that the 'arch-humanism element in social revolution finally removes the covering of self-alienation from all H' (*PH*, vol. 3, 1358 [1607]). However, this process of universalisation does not come about on its own. There is always a risk that the struggles of a certain fraction of the oppressed devolves into corpratism or becomes readily identified with the interests of H, without the situation of considerable segments of the oppressed – e.g., women or minorities – seeing any noticeable transformation.

4. 'For centuries', wrote Frantz **Fanon** in 1961, 'Europe has stifled virtually the whole of H', subjugated it 'for its own purposes and glory' (1961/2004, 235), 'justif[ying] its crimes and legitimiz[ing] the enslavement in which it held four-fifths of H' 'in the name of […] the spirit of Europe' (237). According to Susan **Buck-Morss**, the ambiguity of the Enlightenment – i.e., of an epoch that enabled the 'tremendous broadening of the horizon of life' through 'man [becoming] conscious of his belonging to mankind' (**Lukács** 1963/2023, 454) – is best illustrated by the fact that at the very moment that freedom was being declared the 'highest and universal political value', the 'economic practice of slavery […] was increasing quantitatively and intensifying qualitatively, […] paradoxically facilitating the global spread of the very Enlightenment ideals that were in such fundamental contradiction to it' (2009, 21). Therefore, a perspective limited to "Western" industrial societies cannot do justice to the questions of H, not to mention the questions of the emancipation of the working class that are associated with it.

4.1 'Let it not be said that we no longer believe in the liberation of H', affirmed Eric **Hobsbawm** in 1987 during a discussion with Peter **Glotz** on renouncing the idea of 'world revolution' (592). If liberation stands as one alternative in the present time, the other is no longer "merely" the possibility that we will annihilate ourselves through war, but rather also by destroying the very basis of life. One of the central components of the discourse of neoliberal globalisation, accompanied by the unfettering of transnational capital and the hegemonic status of the USA that has served to legitimise it, has been an image of

H conceived as cosmopolitan. However, the "one world" created after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of state socialism is an abstraction; one that obscures growing global inequalities and conflicts and – through its deceiving indeterminacy – contributes to the return of nationalism, racism, and sectarianisms of all kinds.

One attempt to counter this globalisation discourse with a grassroots alternative was the World Social Forum, established in 2001. As formulated in their charter of principles from 2002, its advocates addressed H's problems by conceiving of the forum as a global platform of organisations and movements that seeks to 'increase the capacity for social resistance to the process of dehumanisation the world is undergoing', among other things by means of 'humanising measures' (cited in **Anand** et al. 2004, 364). The initiative is described as a 'process' aiming at 'planetary citizenship' (ibid.). However, its network of organisations and movements has been unable to generate an effective basis for resistance and change at the scale of H. While the forum's activity peaked in the 2000s the diagnosis is still applicable – especially when anthropogenic climate change and the destructive aftermath of the financial crisis of 2007–8 are taken into account: 'Globalise the struggle! Globalise hope!' were the demands of the social movements in Mumbai in 2004 (476). Building the organisational framework and international alliances needed to achieve this remains a challenge for the nascent H.

4.2 *'Does* H want to survive?' asked Chinghiz **Aitmatov** in 1992, and, if the answer is yes: 'Then why does it subject itself to this incredible self-destruction?' (322) The answer is not to be found in the unspecified 'we' of H. What **Brecht** formulated in 1934/35 remains unchanged: 'The great truth of our epoch (the knowledge about which is still not sufficient, but without which no other relevant truth can be found) is that this part of the world is sinking into barbarism because the existing relations of property of the means of production is being clung to with violence' (GA 22.1, 88 et sq.).

According to **Bloch**, '*militant optimism*' will be needed to oppose this, for, 'as **Marx** says, no abstract ideals are realised, but rather the repressed elements of the new, humanized society, that is, of the concrete ideal, are set free' (*PH*, vol. 1, 199 [229]). The concept of a social H thus points to the historical-dialectical movement that leads 'from the generally-ideal human, beyond mere individuals, and on to the ground of real H and possible humankind' (307). According to **Lukács**, there is a potential to resolve the tension in the concept of H, because, on the one hand, 'the fate of mankind more and more enters into the consciousness of people as a reality', and, on the other hand, a 'broadening and deepening', a 'becoming concrete […] of the personality' occurs 'when it is

capable of experiencing and consciously feeling its participation in the life of mankind as an organic aspect of itself' (1963/2023, 454 et sq.). A task that, in the spirit of a plural universalism, calls for liberating the potential of H's unification from the shackles of an antagonist societal form.

Wolfram Adolphi and Victor Strazzeri
Both parts of the article translated by Soliman Lawrence

Bibliography

C. **Aitmatov**, D. **Ikeda**, *Ode to the Grand Spirit: A Dialogue with Daisaku Ikeda*, London et al. 2009.

A. **Anand**, A. **Escobar**, J. **Sen**, P. **Waterman** (eds.), 'Politische Erklärung des Weltsozialforums Indien: Prinzipiencharta' (2002), 361–4, 'Aufruf der sozialen Bewegungen und Massenorganisationen beim Weltsozialforum 2004', 473–6, *The World Social Forum: Challenging Empires*, 2004.

S. **Buck-Morss**, 'Hegel and Haiti', *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History*, Pittsburgh 2009, 21–75.

F. **Fanon**, *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), transl. R. Philcox, with commentary by J.-P. Sartre and H.K. Bhabha, New York 2004.

J.G. **Fichte**, *Contribution to the Correction of the Public's Judgments on the French Revolution* (1793), Hamburg 1973.

E. **Hobsbawm**, 'Man soll nicht sagen, dass wir nicht weiter an die Befreiung der Menschheit glauben: Gespräch mit Eric Hobsbawm', *Die Neue Gesellschaft/Frankfurter Hefte*, 34th edn., 1987, no. 7, 580–92.

C.L.R. **James**, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San-Domingo-Revolution* (1938), New York 1963.

C.L.R. **James**, 'Dialectical Materialism and the Fate of Humanity' (1947), *The C.L.R. James Reader*, ed. and pref. by A. Grimshaw, Oxford 1992, 153–81.

G.E. **Lessing**, *Werke und Briefe*, ed. G.E. Grimm, vol. 4, Frankfurt/M 1997.

G. **Lukács**, *The Specificity of the Aesthetic, Vol. 1* (1963), transl. and ed. E.M. Bachman with assistance from T. Miller, Leiden-Boston 2023.

W. **Markov**, *Revolution im Zeugenstand: Frankreich 1789–1799*, 2 vols., Leipzig 1982.

→ anti-colonialism, Black Marxism, categorical imperative, civilisation, climate politics, colonialism, conception of the human being, cosmopolitism (modern), debate on humanism, decolonisation, earth, ecology, elements of the new society, emancipation, enlightenment, ensemble of social relations, equality,

ethics, ethnocentrism, eurocentrism, exterminism, Fanonism, freedom/liberty, French Revolution, generic questions/species problems, globalisation, Haitian Revolution, history, human dignity, human essence, human rights, Humanism, humanisation, ideal, internationalist movement, liberation, multinational working class, North-South conflict, peace movement, periphery/centre, plural universalism, proletariat, racism, recognition, relationship of humans and nature, single/particular/general, slavery/slave mode of production, species-being/species-essence, standpoint/perspective, subject, Third World, totality, transnational capitalism, universal history, universalism, utopia, whole, working class, world market, world revolution

→ Anerkennung, Antikolonialismus, Arbeiterklasse, Aufklärung, Befreiung, Black Marxism, Dritte Welt, Einzelnes/Besonderes/Allgemeines, Elemente der neuen Gesellschaft, Emanzipation, Ensemble der gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse, Entkolonisierung, Erde, Ethik, Ethnozentrismus, Eurozentrismus, Exterminismus, Fanonismus, Französische Revolution, Freiheit, Friedensbewegung, Ganzes, Gattungsfragen, Gattungswesen, Geschichte, Gleichheit, Globalisierung, Haitianische Revolution, Humanismus, Humanismusstreit, Ideal, internationalistische Bewegung, kategorischer Imperativ, Klimapolitik, Kolonialismus, Kosmopolitismus (moderner), Menschenbild, Menschenrechte, Menschenwürde, Mensch-Natur-Verhältnis, Menschwerdung, multinationale Arbeiterklasse, Nord-Süd-Konflikt, Ökologie, Peripherie/Zentrum, pluraler Universalismus, Proletariat, Rassismus, Sklaverei/Sklavenhaltergesellschaft, Standpunkt/Perspektive, Subjekt, Totalität, transnationaler Kapitalismus, Universalgeschichte, Universalismus, Utopie, Weltmarkt, Weltrevolution, Wesen des Menschen, Zivilisation

CHAPTER 24

Immaterial Labour

A: ʿamal lā-māddī. – F: travail immatériel. – G: immaterielle Arbeit. – R: nematerial'nyj trud. – S: trabajo inmaterial. – C: fēiwùzhì de láodòng 非物质的劳动

The expression "IL" was coined by Henri **Storch** in the early 19th cent., following Jean-Baptiste **Say** and the French "ideologues". These economists were concerned with defusing Adam **Smith**'s notion that 'the labour of some of the most respectable orders in the society is [...] unproductive of any value' (*Wealth*, *GE II*, 330). **Marx**, who devotes much space to this debate about, and above all against, this thesis in *TSV*, cites **Storch**'s talk of "IL", but does not however adopt the expression in his own vocabulary. **Marx**'s concern is 'the connection between intellectual [...] production and material production' on the basis of an analysis of 'the specific form of material production' and of the 'structure of society' deriving from that form (MECW 31/182 [MEW 26.1/256 et sq.]).

In the context of neoliberal discourse, especially about the "new economy", and talk about the "dematerialisation of the economy", the expression "IL" has had a second appearance at the end of the 20th cent., this time with a widespread impact, radiating over to the Left. Strictly speaking, it is a non-concept [*Unbegriff*], with at most a polemical function against sedimented notions of labour from the carbon age of industry or the Fordist formulation of the opposition between "mental" and "manual" labour. 'Of course it is nonsense to speak of "IL". Labour is always material!', says Antonio **Negri** (1996/7, 97). Like other Italian "post-workerists", Negri – who does not seem to be aware of the history of the concept and **Marx**'s rejection of it – never tires of using "IL" as an umbrella concept for all post-Fordist labour and for the invocation of a new revolutionary subject (i.e., the "mass intellectuals" as successors to the Fordist "mass workers"). In this way, not only is the concept of labour expanded beyond the boundaries of formal social labour, but it is also stretched out to include all possible intellectual, communicative, and emotional aspects of activity or dimensions of production – from financial speculation to bearing children. The expression functions here not as an (epistemological or ontological) analytical concept, but as a myth in the **Sorel**ian sense, with a communist intention, as a political slogan that aims at a new proletarian identification of the multiply divided working people in "post-Fordism", iridescently phrased in order to offer something to everyone.

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_025
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

From an epistemological viewpoint, "immaterial" would only be the "interior" of consciousness, and not even the expression thereof. Pure thought or imaginative activity could be considered IL. But that is not what is meant in IL discourse. Even if the discourse is thus vulgar-philosophical and even if its mobilising intention ('Immaterial workers of the world, unite!'; cf. **Immaterial Workers** 2000) is illusory, it draws a certain amount of evidence from the dispersion of the computer as a 'universal tool or rather as the central tool through which all activities might pass' (**Hardt**/**Negri** 2000, 292). It also draws upon the change in labour and the division of labour as well as gender relations effected thereby. For this reason, it is appropriate to call the use of IL a dialectic of appearance – which is also more generally appropriate for the discourse of the "post-industrial" '"dematerialisation" of money and possessions', as it was called in a review of **Rifkin** (**Deckstein** 2000).

Because the post-workerist vocabulary draws on **Marx** (albeit ignoring his critique of **Storch**'s concept of IL) and, because, while appealing to **Marx**, it declares the redundancy of his theory of value in the name of IL at the same time (**Negri**/**Hardt** 1994, 10 et sq.), it is necessary to study **Marx**'s vocabulary, in which the expressions "material/immaterial" have several meanings. In order to avoid equivocations and to clarify Marx's seldomly-used expression "immaterial", it is necessary to explicate the range in which he uses the term "material" as complementary.

1. **Marx** indeed does not adopt the expression "IL", but he does occasionally speak of 'non-material production' (*Ms 61–63*, MECW 34/143 [MEGA II.3.6/2182]; again almost verbatim in *Results of the Immediate Process of Production*, in *C I*, 1047 [MEGA II.4.1/116]) in contrast to 'immediate material production' (MECW 4/49 [MEW 2/52]) or simply 'material production' (*Gr*, MECW 28/17 [MEW 13/615]). He states, paraphrasing **Say**, that the 'ideological, etc., classes' (MECW 31/30 [MEW 26.1/146]) produce '"immaterial" commodities' (ibid.). It could seem that the talk of 'the process of material production' (*C I*, 173 [MEW 23/94]) or of the 'material mode of production' (411 [315]) would posit "immaterial" as the complementary opposite in these cases.

1.1 **Marx** mostly follows everyday speech that uses "material" in many ways, partly for "physical consistency [*stofflich*]", "corporeal", then again for "financial", "economic", "social", or simply "real". Thus, in *GI*, production is conceived as the 'material' 'fundamental form of this activity [...], on which depend all other forms – mental, political, religious, etc.' (MECW 5/82 [MEW 3/71]). Regarding the wage-levels and living standards, Marx can say: 'The material position of the worker has improved, but at the cost of his social position' (*Wage Labour*, MECW 9/221 [MEW 3/71]).

Marx writes retrospectively that, as editor of the *Rheinische Zeitung* in 1842/43, he 'first found myself in the embarrassing position of having to discuss so-called material interests' (*Pref 59*, MECW 29/261 et sq.; transl. corr. [MEW 13/7]). 'Material' means here: concerning property or income. For polite society, it was understood that the façade that behaviour is guided by ideas or matches ideality had to be kept up. One does not speak of money; one has it. The pseudonym for abstract wealth was borrowed from the old metaphysics, which firmly held 'the opposition between the material and the immaterial to be insuperable' (**Hegel**, *Enc III*, 31), the material was named the complementary opposite of the ideal. One can observe in **Marx** what **Brecht** means when he says that the mode of speaking of the classical thinkers often resembles shields that are dented from their struggle with their opponents. This is why he puts 'so-called' before 'material interests'. – In interpreting **Marx**, one must always begin with the recognition that he uses the expression 'material' equivocally.

The epistemologically influenced vocabulary, on the other hand, can be observed when **Marx** polemicises in *HF* against transforming '*real objective* chains that exist *outside me* into *merely ideal*, merely *subjective* chains, existing merely *in me* and thus of converting all *external* sensuously perceptible struggles into pure struggles of thought' (MECW 4/82 et sq. [MEW 2/87]), and accordingly wanting 'to abolish *material* estrangement [*Entfremdung*] by purely *inward spiritual* action' (82 [ibid.]). In the 'Postface' to the second edition of *C I* he states: 'With me the reverse is true: the ideal is nothing but the material world reflected in the mind of man, and translated into forms of thought' (*C I*, 102 [MEW 23/27]). This is reductive because it leaps over the insight of the *ThF* into the practical embeddedness of this transplanting and translation, effacing the difference from **Feuerbach**'s sensualist realism, which above all facilitated the corresponding misinterpretation in Soviet Marxism since **Plekhanov**.

1.2 With his talk of the '"immaterial" commodities' of the 'ideological, etc., classes' (MECW 31/30 [MEW 26.1/145 et sq.]), **Marx** critically takes up Adam **Smith** and Henri **Storch**. For **Smith**, the issue is the status of services as regards theory of value in the context of differentiating between productive and unproductive labour. Here, 'not material' apparently means that the product is not a graspable "thing" in the everyday sense of the term. In *C I* **Marx** approaches the concept of the commodity in terms of its kind of being [*Seinsart*] in that he conceives it as 'first of all, an external object, a thing' (*C I*, 126 [MEW 23/49]). He does not subsume its characteristic of satisfying human needs under any such ontological restriction. 'The nature of these needs, whether they arise, for example, from the stomach, or the imagination, makes no difference' (125 [ibid.]). In a footnote, he lets Nicholas **Barbon** speak: 'Desire [...] is the appet-

ite of the mind' (ibid.; Barbon 1696, 2). Furthermore, 'how the thing [*Sache*] satisfies man's need' (ibid.) should play no role.

In explicating the differentiation between productive and unproductive labour adopted by **Smith**, **Marx** separates the concept of the productive from its relation to the 'external thing [*Ding*]' and connects it to the societal relation in which a labour is performed. The concept thereby reveals its relativity or its positionality [*Standpunktbezogenheit*]. That which, from the standpoint of capital, is productive because it generates surplus-value is not necessarily so from the standpoint of the preservation of life, and vice-versa. In capitalism, therefore, he states stridently, it is not good fortune, but rather, 'a misfortune to be a productive worker' (MECW 31/119 [MEW 26.1/196]). Teachers or singers, according to his examples, perform productive labour when they teach or sing in a capital-relation. Nassau William **Senior**'s involuntarily comical outraged sentence makes this explanation laughable: 'According to **Smith**, the lawgiver of the Hebrews [i.e. Moses] was an unproductive labourer' (*Principes fondamentaux de l'écon. pol.*, Paris 1836, 198; as cited in MECW 31/184 [MEW 26.1/259]).

The concept of value, moreover, becomes "dereified [*entdinglicht*]" in that the notion of value as a material [*dinglich*] attribute is comprehended as a displaced [*ver-rückt*] way of expressing a reified [*verdinglicht*] societal relation within the framework of production based on the private division of labour [*privat-arbeitsteilige Produktion*]. When **Marx** characterises value as 'something *immaterial*, something indifferent to its material [*stofflich*] consistency' (*Gr*, MECW 28/235 [MEW 42/230]), he does so in his confrontation with Jean-Baptiste **Say** whose discussion uses the terms 'matter' and 'immaterial'. If "immaterial" means here "indifferent to material consistency", then the concepts "material consistency [*Stoff*]" and "material [*stofflich*]" – in **Aristotle**'s metaphysics, the complementarily subordinated counterpart of "form" and "formal" – have the advantage, in contrast to the concepts "matter [*Materie*]" and "the material [*das Materielle*]", of not being appropriated by an epistemological framework in philosophical terminology. **Marx** reformulates the Aristotelian opposition of form vs. material consistency [*Stoff*] as that between social form-determination and physical-material [*physisch-stofflicher*] consistency. Relations of production, however, though they are 'not-material [*nicht-stofflich*]' (but rather, social), are in no way immaterial in the philosophical sense. The 'invisible threads' that capital 'draws through' the production-process (MECW 28/230 [MEW 42/225]) are those of domination. But they are not as invisible in the factory – although, here too, they have, as **Brecht** put it, 'slipped into the domain of the functional' (*The* Threepenny *Lawsuit*, 1932/2001, 164) – as they are in the product in which 'capital seems to have finally disappeared as a formal relation [*Formbeziehung*]' (MECW 28/230 [MEW 42/225]).

Thus, that which is non-physical [*unstoffliches*] like this 'formal relation' can very well belong to the material in the philosophical sense. This is true too of physical conditions and relations: gravitation is neither of material consistency [*stofflich*] nor visible, yet it is a fundamental condition of all that is physical [*stofflich*]. Moreover, there are visible energy-processes that are not physical [*stofflich*], but material [*materiell*]. Lacking a more developed conceptual apparatus, **Hegel** describes the mode of being of light as 'incorporeal, in fact, immaterial matter' (*Enc II*, 93), and he says of sound that 'as non-material this passes away' (126); however, he states that 'what is active in magnetism is nothing material, but pure immaterial form' (165).

1.3 In his confrontation with **Smith**'s categorisation of the activities of the upper strata as regards theory of value – which **Marx** categorised as the 'ideological [...] classes [*Stände*]' –, Marx encounters **Storch.** In 1815, Storch used his concept of 'IL' or '*travail immatériel*' (*Cours d'écon. pol. etc.*, 1823, III, 218), to which he attached the concept of the 'biens internes', or 'internal goods' (240; see MECW 31/181 [MEW 26.1/434 et sq.]), because he wanted, contra **Smith**, those élites engaged with such goods to be recognised as "productive". **Storch**'s concept of IL follows the diction of Jean-Baptiste **Say**'s *Traité d'économie politique* (1803) which renames those activities that **Smith** classified unproductive as 'travail productif de produits immatériels' (1817, I, 120) – that is, he displaced the negating prefix of "un-productive" onto the material of the produced goods. Comte **Destutt de Tracy**, chief theorist of the ideologues, follows this in turn. He begins by declaring that all labour is productive, regardless of whether it produces material or immaterial goods; then he differentiates, again cutting across both kinds of labour, between rapidly consumed and long-lived goods: 'A discovery is of an eternal utility. [...] [W]hile [the work] of a ball, concert, a theatrical representation is instantaneous and disappear [*sic*] immediately' (1817, 175).

In the lectures on political economy that he held for Russian Grand Duke **Nicholas** in 1815, and that **Say** published in Paris, Henri **Storch** baptises the labour that produces immaterial goods as 'IL' and ascribes to it the production of the '*biens internes* ou les élémens [*sic*] de la civilisation' as the prerequisite for the production of national wealth (*Cours d'écon. pol. etc.*, III, 217). **Smith**'s mistake, he argues, was 'not having distinguished immaterial values from wealth' (218). 'Therewith the matter is really closed', interjects **Marx** (MECW 31/181 [MEW 26.1/256]; transl. corr.). **Storch** was not even able to 'formulate [...] for himself the task, let alone its solution [...]. In order to examine the connection between intellectual [...] production and material production it is above all necessary to grasp the latter not as a general category but in *definite historical*

form'; otherwise it is 'impossible to understand what is specific in the intellectual production corresponding to it and the reciprocal influence of one on the other' (182 [256 et sq.]).

By 'IL' (for which **Marx** uses the term 'intellectual production'), **Storch** means 'all kinds of professional activities of the ruling class, who carry out social functions as a business'. He was, however, unable to understand the existence of these functions, and of the social strata that perform them, in relation to 'the specific historical structure of their production relations'; nor was he able to comprehend 'the ideological components of the ruling class' of the 'free intellectual production of this particular social formation' (ibid. [257]). **Marx** expressly agrees with **Storch**'s reproach of **Smith**'s critics for not having differentiated between 'valeurs immatérielles' and 'richesses', and **Marx** translates it into his own language: 'They assert that the production of intellectual products or the production of services is *material* production' (183 [258]). Otherwise, Marx judges **Storch** as not having gone beyond 'general superficial analogies and relations between intellectual and material wealth'. **Marx** obviously considers **Storch**'s category of IL unusable. He continues to use the concept of 'intellectual labour', which is concerned with 'intellectual production'.

1.4 If one were to translate "immaterial" as "not-physical [*nicht-stofflich*]", then one could clarify what is problematic about the expression "IL" through the nonsensical concept "non-physical labour". The notions spontaneously associated with the difference between 'mental' or 'intellectual' vs. 'manual' labour – a difference that the class-structure has turned into an opposition – can be observed in a comment by Ludwig **Feuerbach**: 'Hans **Sachs** was indeed both a cobbler and a poet. But the shoes were the work of his hands whereas his poems were that of his head. As the effect, so the cause' (*FB*, 194). However, what **Marx** said in his well-known example of the architect is true too for the cobbler, namely, that he put together the shoe 'in his mind' and with the help of his learnt qualifications before he crafted it in leather (*C I*/284 [MEW 23/193]). And vice versa, Hans **Sachs** wrote his pieces on paper, with his own hand, using pen and ink, intended for a practical performance in space and time. The difference is thus relative in terms of the physical aspect, and only the predominance, cemented by class-position, of the one or the other aspect raises it to an opposition.

The most general definition of labour that **Marx** offers is true for intellectual labour no less than for those named by the reified term 'manual labourers': 'On the one hand, all labour is an expenditure of human labour-power, in the physiological sense', and '[o]n the other hand, [...] in a particular form

and with a definite aim' (*C I*, 137 [MEW 23/61]). By labour-power, Marx means 'the aggregate of those mental and physical capabilities existing in the physical form, the living personality, of a human being, capabilities which he sets in motion whenever he produces a use-value of any kind' (270 [181]). What workers employ are their 'natural forces which belong to [their] own body, [their] arms, legs, head and hands', and at the end of the process 'a result emerges which had already been conceived by the worker at the beginning, hence already existed ideally' (283 et sq. [192 et sq.]). 'Ideally' means here: "in the imagination", as "plan". Marx emphasises that 'a purposeful will' that is expressed as 'close attention', becomes all the more important the less the worker 'is attracted by the nature of the work and the way in which it has to be accomplished, and the less, therefore, he enjoys it as the free play of his own physical and mental powers' (284 [193]).

Marx thus uses an integral concept of labour that encompasses the "manual" and the "mental" dimensions. In order to establish the connection among various kinds of labour – especially predominantly "mental" and predominantly "manual" – he coined the concept of the 'collective labourer' to account for the transformation of the product into one of a 'combination of workers, each of whom stands at a different distance from the actual manipulation of the object of labour' (643 [531]). This is the key to the analysis of all relations in which 'the product ceases to be the product of isolated immediate labour, and it is rather the *combination* of social activity that appears as the producer' (*Gr*, MECW 29/95 [MEW 42/605]).

If one also considers that, in the wake of the neo-liberal expansion of the world-market that was named "globalisation" at the end of the 20th cent., the 'unit of measurement' of value corresponding to the *marché universel* – as the world-market is called in the translation of *C I* by **Roy** and **Marx** (MEGA II.7/483) – is 'the average unit of general labour' (*C I*/702 [MEW 23/584]), then important conceptual approaches for further reflection under the conditions of transnational high-tech capitalism emerge.

2. The 'thoughtless enthusiasm' that has been ignited by digitalisation as the 'new technology of disembodiment' indicates that the '"New Immaterials" [...] have the wherewithal to become the component capable of bearing the "affirmative culture"' of the 21st cent. (**List** 2001, 206). But even critical currents have been influenced by it. As early as the 1960s, Hans-Magnus **Enzensberger** opined that 'immaterial exploitation' of the subjects by the 'consciousness industry' had superseded the material exploitation of workers (see 1962/1974). A generation later, the *Zapatista* Subcomandante **Marcos** describes the new world-order that neo-liberal politics of globalisation is striving for as 'planet-

ary, permanent, immediate, and immaterial' (2000, 14) – but without any further expanding on it.

In the first speculative high phase of the "new economy" at the turn of the 21st cent., theories of the "immaterialisation" or "de-physicalisation [*Entstofflichung*]" of economy were rampant. 'IL' seemed to be 'the new dominant in the chain of value-creation' (**Möller** 2000, 215). 'In this new world that trades in information and services, in consciousness and lived experience, in which the material gives way to the immaterial and commodifying time becomes more important than expropriating space, the conventional notions of property relations and markets, which came to define the industrial way of life, become increasingly less relevant' (**Rifkin** 2000, 14 et sq.). The 'new design-science', declares one of the authors with a special closeness to capital – without noticing that he paraphrases the commodity aesthetic's most general mode of effectivity (see **Haug** 1980, 51 et sq.), – 'must define its task as marketing before the product. Only then will it be mature enough for an economy that appears increasingly "soft" and immaterial' (**Bolz** 1994, 74 et sq.). The bursting of the dot-com bubble and especially the September 11 attacks in 2001, and the reaction of the USA, whose 'global war on terror' veils the war for the control of the oil-supplies (see **Haug** 2003, 199–276), have indeed muffled the affirmative discourse that "the material gives way to the immaterial" – though not the critical discourse of the post-workerists.

2.1 The Italian 'workerists', who in the last decade of the "golden years" of Fordism agitated for a revolutionary politics to the left of the Italian Communist Party and unions among the 'mass workers' in northern Italian industries, lost their mass basis in the transition to automation (see **Wright** 1997). When, about ten years later, at the same time as the fall of the Berlin Wall, many Italian universities were occupied by students, former workerists identified in this movement the new subject of social change. This was the birth-hour of 'post-workerism'. It declared that students are 'immaterial workers' and then expanded this concept to include ever more groups. Its representatives in Italy are therefore called 'the immaterialists [*immaterialisti*]'.

Negri sees in the movements of students and pupils 'the first expressions of the revolt of IL' (1996/7, 82). But this is overly inclusive, overlooking all differences and fissures: 'To an ever-greater extent, labor in our societies is tending toward IL' (Negri/**Hardt** 1994, 10). Here, all labour is without hesitation renamed as IL. But it is then even more narrowly defined: as 'intellectual, affective, and technico-scientific labor' and, in science-fictional language, as 'labor of the cyborg' (ibid.). Finally: 'The increasingly complex networks of laboring cooperation, the integration of caring labor across the spectrum of production,

and the computerisation of a wide range of laboring processes characterize the contemporary passage in the nature of labor' (ibid.). With the technical professions developing as a result of the victory of the computer, commodity-aesthetic functions of realisation are thrown together – for Maurizio **Lazzarato**, IL in its actual sense is this 'audiovisual production, advertising, fashion, the production of software, photography, cultural activities, and so forth' (1996, 137; cf. **Negri**/**Lazzarato**/**Virno** 1998, 57). Furthermore, all activities that have to do with 'the creation and manipulation of affect' (**Negri**/**Hardt** 2000, 293) are subsumed under IL. In the more narrow sense of "computerised" labour, everything that produces – in **Say**'s (unacknowledged) concept – 'immaterial products' (which the authors mistake for digitalised goods (295; for a critique thereof, see **Haug** 2003, 97–115)) qualifies as IL. Then again, they mean services of all kinds among which industrial labour is more or less thrown in: 'the material labor of the production of durable goods mixes with and tends towards immaterial labor' (**Negri**/**Hardt** 2000, 293).

In order to belong to the category of IL, according to the post-workerists, it is not necessary to be in a formal or informal employment. They justify this abolition of boundaries with the **Marx**ian category of the 'general intellect' from *Gr* (MECW 29/92 [MEW 42/602]): The theoreticians of the New Economy consider the "knowledge-basedness [*Wissensbasiertheit*]" of production (which Marx diagnosed already at the threshold of the 19th cent.) as the specific characteristic of high-tech forces of production: fixed capital is no longer limited to its 'material mode of existence' in the form of machinery (*C I*, 508 [MEW 23/451]) when 'society's general science, knowledge, has become an *immediate productive force*' (*Gr*, MECW 29/92 [MEW 42/602]). Following the path of the "socialist" entrepreneur Robert **Owen**, who in his *Essays on the Formation of the Human Character* (1840, 31) reproaches his own kind for investing in machines while neglecting the 'body and mind' of people, **Marx** reflects that '[f]rom the standpoint of the immediate production process', the 'full development of the individual' can be seen as the 'production of *fixed capital*, this fixed capital being man himself', 'whose mind is the repository of the accumulated knowledge of society' (MECW 29/97 [MEW 42/607]). According to the sketch in *Gr*, capital 'calls into life all the powers of science and Nature, and of social combination and social intercourse, in order to make the creation of wealth (relatively) independent of the labour time employed for that purpose' (92 [602]). From these anticipatory observations, which they hurriedly posit as a description of reality, the post-workerists derive the universal status of IL. Whatever developed social individuals do is, for them, always already IL. Thereby, moreover, the post-workerists can also define themselves as 'workers like the others' (**Negri** 1996/7, 104).

2.2 **Negri** justifies the concept of IL, whose theoretical senselessness he concedes, with the argument 'that in the capitalist-dominated organisation of labour-processes, it is no longer a matter of labour on the basis of purely physical relations. […] Capitalist predominance is based on an autonomy of labour that is constituted outside of it' (97). Here, he is thinking of 'persons who work for television, in the enterprises of data processing, in advertisement, in fashion, i.e. in the clothing industry, etc.' (ibid.). Under post-Fordist conditions, exploitation is 'the exploitation of social cooperation. And affected thereby is the "intellectual proletariat" that needs this cooperation, and that makes it even possible' (101). The thread of reality underlying these circumscriptions is the notion, developed by the research on automation of the 1970s, of the "chained emancipation" of workers under the conditions of automation, their contradictory harnessing as "subordinate-autonomous" subjects and the tearing down of the boundaries between labour and free time. But post-workerist discourse arbitrarily helps itself to these findings and nourishes the illusion that they would apply to forms of labour that are still externally determined.

Finally, **Negri** contaminates his description of IL with the 'phantom-like objectivity […] of human labour-power expended without regard to the [concretely useful] form of its expenditure' that **Marx** presented while introducing the concept of 'abstract labour' in *C I* (128 [MEW 23/52]). He conjures up the 'experience of a mobile, flexible, computerized, immaterialized and spectral labor' that will be shared by all '*as clear as the sun*', a 'real illusion' that no longer knows an outside nor space and time. 'Only a radical "Unheimlich" remains in which we're immersed' (**Negri** 1999, 9). **Marx**'s spectres are 'no longer valid' here; **Derrida** (see 1994) should concern himself rather with 'the phenomenology of a new productive reality' (**Negri** 1999, 9). Here, the concept of IL slides over into that of abstract labour, and it is as though the mysticism of the world of capital had assimilated the discourse critical of it.

2.3 The talk of IL is connected to the neo-liberal narrative of the miracle of a general "dematerialisation of the economy" (for a critical perspective, see **Haug** 2003, 67–96). 'The economy of physical production is superseded by an immaterial economy of information, dominated by the quaternary sector that, commensurate with the demands of production in the global cities, reorganises especially the finance and communication services for businesses' (**Moulier Boutang** 1998, 13). Supposed characteristics are: 1. the sources of wealth are displaced onto conceptive activities; 2. value is added above all through transactions (communication, distribution); 3. no longer the "material", but instead the "immaterial assets" are decisive: 'knowledge, skills in dealing with information, culture' (13 et sq.). This is often presented as though 'the "becoming-immaterial"

[*devenir immatériel*] of capital investment (artificial intelligence, information-technologies, education and information, communication-procedures)' were synonymous with the intellectualising of labour (**Vakaloulis** 2001, 117).

3. The eclectic voluntarism of many post-workerist texts has been criticised multiple times. Frigga **Haug** has described their 'Lorianism' (**Gramsci**) that uses Marxian concepts 'like wantonly thrown-together toys' as 'drug-thinking [*Drogendenken*]' (2000, 204). Enzo **Modugno** who, like **Negri**, emerged from the workerists, replied to the thesis of the epochal dominance of IL with the counter-thesis that the 'microelectric nemesis' is in the process of again taking away from the 'new labourers of total quality' (1996, 21) their intellectual competence that initially increased in the wake of computerisation (22): the "general intellect" has become a machine, and intellectual labour has been subjected to a progressive 'mechanisation of the abstract intellect' (21) – 'the intellectual labourer has become an appendage of the great communication-machine' (24).

Stuart **Hall** starts his critique by addressing the vulgar philosophical notion of immateriality: if the growing significance of language is understood by the post-workerists as the dominance of immateriality, he responds with a reference to the materiality of language: 'The word is now as "material" as the world. Through design, technology and styling, "aesthetics" has already penetrated the world of modern production. Through marketing, layout and style, the "image" provides the mode of representation and fictional narrativization of the body on which so much of modern consumption depends. Modern culture is relentlessly material in its practices and modes of production. And the material world of commodities and technologies is profoundly cultural' (*CritDlgs*, 232). In a wholly different sense, Hall himself speaks of IL when he notes that everyone who 'is into cultural studies seriously as an intellectual practice, must feel, on their pulse, its ephemerality, its insubstantiality, how little it registers, how little we've been able to change anything or get anybody to do anything' (272). In this sense, one might characterise the practice of the "immaterialists", who have fashioned an essential element of their symbolic capital out of the talk of "IL", as itself 'immaterial'. The "intellectualisation" of growing segments of social labour that is driven forward by the development of the high-technological mode of production, as well as the breaks and lines of conflicts on this field, are more likely being covered up by the decisionist imposition of the category of IL on them.

Wolfgang Fritz Haug
Translated by Joseph Fracchia

Bibliography

N. **Barbon**, *A Discourse Concerning Coining the New Money Lighter: In Answer to Mr. Locke's Considerations about Raising the Value of Money*, London 1696.

N. **Bolz**, *Das kontrollierte Chaos: Vom Humanismus zur Medienwirklichkeit*, Düsseldorf-Vienna 1994.

B. **Brecht**, 'The *Threepenny* Lawsuit: A Sociological Experiment' (1932), *Brecht on Film and Radio*, ed. M. Silberman, London-New Delhi-New York-Sydney 2001, 147–99.

D. **Deckstein**, 'Vom Ende der Arbeit zum Ende des Eigentums: Jeremy Rifkins scharfe Analyse, was die New Economy für Mensch und Gesellschaft bedeutet', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 21 August 2000.

J. **Derrida**, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning & the New International*, New York 1994.

A.L.C. **Destutt de Tracy**, *A Treatise on Political Economy*, Georgetown 1817.

H.M. **Enzensberger**, 'The Industrialization of the Mind' (1962), *The Consciousness Industry: On Literature, Politics and Media*, New York 1974, 3–15.

M. **Hardt**, A. **Negri**, *Empire*, Cambridge (MA) 2000.

F. **Haug**, 'Immaterielle Arbeit und Automation', *Argument* 235, vol. 42, 2000, no. 2, 204–14.

W.F. **Haug**, *'Werbung' und 'Konsum': Systematische Einführung in die Warenästhetik*, Berlin/W 1980.

W.F. **Haug**, *High-Tech Kapitalismus: Analysen zu Produktionsweise, Arbeit, Sexualität, Krieg und Hegemonie*, Hamburg 2003.

Immaterial Workers of the World, 'Wozu soll ich dir schon raten?', 2000, https://www.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/fels/archiv/existenz/00702.html.

M. **Lazzarato**, 'Immaterial Labor', *Radical Thought in Italy: A Potential Politics*, ed. P. Virno and M. Hardt, Minneapolis-London 1996, 133–47.

E. **List**, *Grenzen der Verfügbarkeit: Die Technik, das Subjekt und das Lebendige*, Vienna 2001.

Subcomandante Marcos, 'Le fascisme libéral', *Le Monde diplomatique*, vol. 47, 2000, August, 1 and 14.

E. **Modugno**, 'Postfordistische Grundrisse', *Arranca!*, vol. 4, 1996, no. 10, 18–25.

C. **Möller**, 'Immaterielle Arbeit – die neue Dominante in der Wertschöpfungskette', *Argument* 235, vol. 42, 2000, no. 2, 215–26.

Y. **Moulier Boutang**, 'Vorwort', *Umherschweifende Produzenten: Immaterielle Arbeit und Subversion*, ed. T. Atzert, Berlin 1998, 5–22.

A. **Negri**, 'Verlangt das Unmögliche, mit weniger geben wir uns nicht zufrieden', interview with P. Buzari and T. Atzert, *Die Beute*, vol. 3/4, 1996/7, no. 12, 92–108.

A. **Negri**, 'The Specter's Smile', *Ghostly Demarcations: A Symposium on Jacques Derrida's 'Specters of Marx'*, ed. M. Sprinkler, London-New York 1999, 5–16.

A. **Negri**, M. **Hardt**, *Labor of Dionysus: a Critique of the State-Form*, Minneapolis-London 1994.

A. **Negri**, M. **Lazzarato**, P. **Virno**, *Umherschweifende Produzenten: Immaterielle Arbeit und Subversion*, ed. and transl. T. Atzert, Berlin 1998.

J. **Rifkin**, *The Age of Access: The New Culture of Hypercapitalism Where All Life is a Paid-For Experience*, New York 2000.

M. **Vakaloulis**, *Le capitalisme post-moderne: Éléments pour une critique sociologique*, Paris 2001.

S. **Wright**, 'Negri's Class Analysis: Italian Autonomist Theory in the Seventies', *Reconstruction*, 1997, no. 8, 10–22.

→ abstract labour, character (mask), class society, collective labourer, commodity aesthetic, communication, division of labour, domination/rule, empire, epistemology, faux frais, Fordism, form, gender relations, general intellect, general labour/universal labour, ghost/spectre, hacker, high-technological mode of production, idea, ideologue, immaterial, information, information rent, information worker, informational society, interior/exterior, internet, mass intellectuality, mass worker, matter, mental and manual labour, need, object, personification, post-Fordism, post-workerism, productive/unproductive labour, relations, self-valorisation, value-form, visible/invisible, work/labour, workerism

→ abstrakte Arbeit, allgemeine Arbeit, Arbeit, Arbeitsteilung, Bedürfnis, Charaktermaske, Erkenntnistheorie, faux frais, Fordismus, Form, Gegenstand, geistige und körperliche Arbeit, general intellect, Gesamtarbeiter, Geschlechterverhältnisse, Gespenst, Hacker, Herrschaft, hochtechnologische Produktionsweise, Idee, Ideologe, immateriell, Imperium, Information, Informationsarbeiter, Informationsgesellschaft, Informationsrente, innen / außen, Internet, Klassengesellschaft, Kommunikation, Massenarbeiter, Massenintellektualität, Materie, Operaismus, Personifikation, Postfordismus, Postoperaismus, produktive / unproduktive Arbeit, Selbstverwertung, sichtbar / unsichtbar, Verhältnisse, Warenästhetik, Wertform

CHAPTER 25

International Women's Day

A: yaum al-marʾā al-ʿalāmī. – F: Journée internationale de la femme. – G: Internationaler Frauentag. – R: Meždunarodnyj den' ženščin. – S: Día internacional de la mujer. – C: guójì fùnǚ jié 国际妇女节

The history of IWD demonstrates both the strength and the weakness of socialist organisations in relation to the women's question. Its symbolic value is similar to that of May Day as a day of struggle for working people, but the additional addressing of women on a particular day of the year is also a sign of political helplessness. The fact that IWD was organised "from above" made it a compulsory exercise; nevertheless, it could be used as a platform for women's unmet demands. The Second Wave of the Women's Movement largely ignored IWD; only its socialist wing joined the official demonstrations of socialist organisations.

1. The early 20th cent. Suffragette movement used provocative public appearances to fight for women's suffrage and for women's right to education and property. US socialist women continued these actions and proclaimed 28 February 1909 as a national day of protest for women's suffrage and the idea of socialism. The First International Socialist Women's Congress, held in Copenhagen in 1910, took up these actions and called for an IWD (see **Kaplan** 1985, 165 et sqq.). Clara **Zetkin**, one of the leading proponents of an IWD, along with Alexandra **Kollontai**, articulated the strategic orientation: 'In agreement with the class-conscious, political and trade union organisations of the proletariat of their respective countries, the Socialist women of all countries will hold a WD each year, whose foremost purpose it must be the agitation for women's suffrage. This demand must be handled in conjunction with the entire women's question according to its Socialist conception. The WD must have an international character and is to be prepared carefully' (**Zetkin**, *Intern. Women's Day* 1910/2015, 108. transl. corr.; ARS, 480).

On the very eve of that congress, Emperor **Wilhelm II** reasserted the bourgeois patriarchal image of women: 'The main task of the German woman [lies] not in the sphere of assembly and association, nor in the attainment of supposed rights, but in quiet work at home and in the family' (qtd. in **Scholze** 2001, 10). This narrow conception of "female activity" found little favour with the bourgeois women's associations, which at least sought to achieve partial,

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_026
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

individual independence through vocational training and work; the radical demand for complete equality and self-determination and the demonstrative engagement of the suffragettes in direct action, which was often forbidden for women or in any case discriminated against, was not supported by them (cf. **Zetkin** 1928/1971, 119 et sqq.; **Wurms** 1983, 16, 24). The discussions among socialist women about possible coalitions with bourgeois women's associations were correspondingly controversial. The majority, however, sought solidarity with all women's groups in order to organise IWD as a 'unified international action' (**Zektin** 1928/1971, 219). The first IWD took place on 19 March 1911. The background was the commemoration of the March Revolution of 1848/49 and the Paris Commune of 1871.

2. The Third International determined that IWD should be on 8 March. Since 1922, IWD has thus commemorated the strike of the Petrograd women textile workers, which contributed decisively to the outbreak of the Russian Revolution in February 1917. This association was met with hostility in bourgeois women's organisations and within social democracy. Slogans and activities on IWD differed according to party affiliation (see **IG Metall** 1985, 51). Beyond the dissent amongst party leaderships over the "united front", church and bourgeois groups repeatedly participated in local, national, and international alliances on IWD, especially in the context of cross-class campaigns on peace, sexual politics, and solidarity (cf. **Scholze** 2001; **Wurms** 1983). The recognition of IWD in leftist parties and trade unions revealed a moral dilemma of the male-dominated proletarian movement: the inclusion of women in the general proletarian struggle was a strategic decision; at the same time, any deviation in political action was met with extreme suspicion. '[T]he sole reason to celebrate Women's Day was to politicize the primitive consciousness of women workers' (**Chatterjee** 2002, 21). As late as the 1920s, Komsomol supporters in the Soviet Union, among others, sometimes forcefully intervened against events on IWD (cf. 68). Over the course of the 20th cent., IWD became a political holiday rendering women's political demands publicly visible: full equality of women in the political sphere, the right to work and education, equal pay for all, and the protest against violence against women. Sexual-political demands had already been raised since the 1920s: protest against the criminalisation of abortion and the demand for women's sexual self-determination. Expressions of solidarity with women in other countries were also part of the catalogue of demands presented on IWD, as were protests against racism and the exploitation of the "Third World". Although the revolutionary outcome of the First World War brought about a breakthrough for women's suffrage in many countries, the struggles in Europe over this issue sometimes dragged on until the

late 1970s, when they were finally concluded with the introduction of women's suffrage in the Swiss canton of Appenzell.

Wars and national liberation struggles were also caesuras for the socialist women's movement and shifted the conditions of its politics. Thus IWD was also a chronicle of the struggle against the nationalism, imperialism, and chauvinism of bellicose powers (cf. **Zetkin**, *Der intern. soz. Frauentag*, 1915; ARS, 666). As active defenders of peace resolutions, activists of IWD, particularly in Germany, were persecuted and sentenced to prison for 'incitement against militarism' in the years prior to the First World War (**Wurms** 1983, 24). Under 'conditions of martial law, IWD needed to be prepared and celebrated in a de facto illegal way' (**Scholze** 2001, 31). Protest against fascism characterised IWD during the 1930–40s. Fascist regimes criminalised and banned free women's movements, as well as IWD. Fascist rhetoric focused on the symbolic link between wars of conquest, nationalism, and the cult of motherhood; in Germany, for example, Mother's Day was declared a national holiday in 1933. In women's penitentiaries and concentration camps, IWD took on the meaning of collective memory and hope even through the smallest symbolic expressions, such as an inmate wearing a red sewing thread on the jacket of her prisoners' clothing (66 et sqq.). In the underground, subversive forms of action were initiated or Mother's Day was politicised: "German mothers" were called upon to resist the fascist war effort (74).

3. The Russian Revolution enshrined 'equal rights for women' in the Soviet constitution. IWD was propagated as a day of action for the emancipation of women (cf. **Álvarez González** 1999). On IWD 1920, **Lenin** declared women's liberation to be a revolutionary component of socialism: 'It is the chief task of the working women's movement to fight for economic and social equality, and not only formal equality, for women' (CW 30/409). Choi **Chatterjee** comprehends the political rhetoric of the young Soviet state power as a form of political practice: 'Women's Day celebrations were not merely symbolic – camouflage for the exercise of power – but were a strategic form of cultural practice that marked the distinctiveness of Soviet civilization, legitimized the Soviet mission for women, and articulated the Soviet construction of gender' (2002, 6). In this sense, IWD was stylised into a 'sacralizing ritual' and put into service to demonstrate, both to the indigenous population and to capitalist states, the special care with which the Soviet state attended to its women – e.g., inclusion in wage labour, literacy, development of welfare state institutions. Women's concrete agency could only develop within this state-approved framework (87). '[I]n the 1920s there was an attempt to harness communist women's movements around the world to the Soviet exemplar' (78). Women's political practices in

the SU – conducting educational and mobilisation campaigns in factories and collective farms on IWD in order to win over female production and agricultural workers – were taken up by activists in other countries (cf. **Scholze** 2001, 50). One strategic instrument of political education was women's theatre as performed on IWD: according to **Chatterjee**, the new Soviet woman appeared there as a 'protean archetype' rooted in popular culture, rather than conforming to an idealised socialist identity (2002, 102). The **Stalin** era announced itself through an emphasis on female sexual abstinence and a call for stable marital relationships. By the late 1930s, IWD was enshrined as a national holiday. State discourses now presented IWD in the SU as combining nation, work, motherhood, and media-celebrated heroines; **Chatterjee** considers this an ideological buttressing of the belief in equality and welfare within the Soviet system (135 et sqq.).

4. Following the Second World War, IWD was also institutionalised in other state socialist countries, assuming a character comparable to May Day. In the state socialist countries, the IWD slogans of the 1950–80s reflected the developmental stages of the state's policy on women. These stages would largely be repeated in the industrialised countries, in a kind of catch-up development: In the 1950–60s, the increased "inclusion of women in wage labour" was accompanied by changes in labour and social legislation; from the 1970s onward, this was rapidly followed by "qualification offensives" and a revised family law, intended to improve the "compatibility of family and work" – however, for women only (**Scholze** 2001, 107 et sqq.). The social achievements of the period – including an almost complete inclusion of women in the labour force, the expansion of childcare and care for the elderly, and improved housing policies – ended women's economic dependence on their husbands. At the same time, IWD conveyed the logic of integration: reconciling motherhood and the orientation toward industrial progress with an eye toward increasing labour productivity. The power relations in which the contradictory emancipation of the sexes developed remained concealed (102 et sq.). State supervision of IWD depoliticised many progressive beginnings, such as the discussions on IWD accountability reports, partly intended as a demonstration against the patriarchal party, and the development of communal projects, which depended 'ultimately on the receptiveness of the managers [in the factories] and the activity and assertiveness of the trade union leaderships' (165). For the most part, IWD degenerated into a sociopolitical and mandatory special event: the inauguration of children's and service facilities was accompanied by tributes to women who were willing and able to perform; the "day of struggle" was converted into an organising of women's cultural and sporting events, or privatised

as an alternative Mother's Day within the family and as a day of assisting in the neighbourhood and civic work (85 et sqq., 111 et sqq.).

5. In most countries, IWD established itself as part of the left-wing culture of political liberation (cf. **Scholze** 2001, 104 et sqq.). The international influence of the socialist-oriented Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF) led, in 1975, to 8 March being 'included in the UN calendar of significant days to be celebrated annually' (129).

The Second Wave of the Women's Movement in industrialised countries largely ignored IWD, with the exception of the Movement's socialist wing. For socialist women, the problem of "double militancy" arose; i.e., they had to organise public campaigns and rallies on both 8 March and 1 May, while the autonomous women's movement designated 30 April, Walpurgis Night, as its day of struggle, on which it sought to "reclaim the night". On IWD, the West Berlin Socialist Women's League linked legal and labour policy, as well as family and sexual policy demands with the concerns of the environmental, peace and international solidarity movements – thereby putting itself at odds with the views of the SPD and the small communist Socialist Unity Party of West Berlin (SEW). Feminist congresses held on IWD boosted the development of experience- and practice-oriented feminist research (129 et sq.). The 1970s UN slogan for worldwide campaigns on "Equality – Development – Peace" formulated a consensus that allowed even social democratic parties and trade unions to embrace IWD anew (125 et sqq.). During the 1980s in particular, participation of trade union women in IWD celebrations was on the rise; struggles against unemployment and for a reduction of working hours were part of those celebrations (cf. **IG Metall** 1985, 83 et sqq.; **Wurms** 1983, 130 et sq.).

When women attended IWD celebrations in their roles as soldiers and functionaries, when bourgeois women attended alongside sex workers, or when Iranian women demonstratively removed the chador as a symbol of outdated customs and the discrimination of women (**Scholze** 2001, 134), the IWD also functioned, in part, as a way of protesting patriarchal norms of femininity. In addition to rallies with political speeches and reports, various forms of action were deployed: plays, readings, demonstrations, break meetings at workplaces, etc. (157). By the end of the 1980s, IWD was celebrated in more than 125 countries. The tendency to 'celebrate IWD less with demonstrations, rallies, and lectures, and increasingly as a cultural event, became more entrenched' (141). Since the 1990s, few overarching political campaigns have taken place on 8 March; one exception being the 1994 "FrauenStreikTag" (Women's Strike Day) in Germany, which united initiatives and organisations protesting against the discrimination of women in society, at work and within the family, and which led to the

founding of a Feminist Party, whose significance, however, remained marginal (167 et sqq.). Another event was the World Women's March in 2000, a global star march and relay race intended to carry the protest against the conditions of poverty and violence affecting the lives of women to as many countries as possible (184).

Overall, IWD has hardly been able to develop as a civil society initiative of women. Both the rituals and the postulates of IWD have changed over time. The political holiday and the rhetoric associated with it served as a framework for a state socialist discourse on the women's question that also largely overshadowed the initiatives of socialist women in capitalist countries. The collapse of the SU has however brought this to a halt for the time being.

Victor Rego Diaz and Antje Schmitt
Translated by Max Henninger

Bibliography

A. **Álvarez González**, *Los origenes y la celebración del Día de La Mujer, 1910–1945*, Oviedo 1999.

C. **Chatterjee**, *Celebrating Women: Gender, Festival Culture, and Bolshevik Ideology, 1910–1939*, Pittsburgh 2002.

IG **Metall**, *Internationaler Frauentag: Tag der Frauen seit 75 Jahren*, Frankfurt/M 1985.

T. **Kaplan**, 'On the Socialist Origins of International Women's Day', *Feminist Studies*, vol. 11 (1985), no. 1, 163–71.

S. **Scholze**, *Der Internationale Frauentag einst und heute: Geschichtlicher Abriss und weltweite Tradition vom Entstehen bis zur Gegenwart*, Berlin 2001.

R. **Wurms**, *Der Internationale Frauentag: Wir wollen Freiheit, Frieden, Recht*, 2nd edn., Frankfurt/M 1983.

C. **Zetkin**, *Zur Geschichte der proletarischen Frauenbewegung Deutschlands* (1928), Frankfurt/M 1971.

C. **Zetkin**, 'International Women's Day' (1910), *Selected Writings*, ed. P.S. Forner, Chicago 2015.

C. **Zetkin**, *Ausgewählte Reden und Schriften*, vol. 1, Berlin/GDR 1957 (cited as ARS).

→ administrative socialism, anti-authoritarian movement, apathy in authoritarian, basic/fundamental rights, basic contradiction, birth control, bolshevisation, campaign, civil society, class consciousness, counterpublic/oppositional space, domination/rule, double militancy, elections, emancipation, equal

rights policy, fascism, female education, feminism, forms of (trade) unionist struggle, free love, freedom/liberty, gender, gender democracy, gender relations, idealisation, internationalist movement, labour movement, liberation, May Day, mothers, neighbourhood movement, new social movements, Paris Commune, parties, peace movement, population policy, progress, Russian Revolution, self-determination, state socialism, suffrage, suffragettes, united front, welfare state, women's emancipation, women's labour policy, women's movement, women's policy, women's question, work/effort of remembering, working class

→ antiautoritäre Bewegung, Apathie im befehlsadministrativen Sozialismus, Arbeiterbewegung, Arbeiterklasse, Befreiung, Bevölkerungspolitik, Bolschewisierung, doppelte Militanz, Einheitsfront, Emanzipation, Erinnerungsarbeit, Erster Mai, Faschismus, Feminismus, Fortschritt, Frauenarbeitspolitik, Frauenbewegung, Frauenemanzipation, Frauenfrage, Frauenpolitik, freie Liebe, Freiheit, Friedensbewegung, Geburtenkontrolle, Gegenöffentlichkeit, Geschlecht, Geschlechterdemokratie, Geschlechterverhältnisse, gewerkschaftliche Kampfformen, Gleichstellungspolitik, Grundrechte, Grundwiderspruch, Herrschaft, Idealisierung, internationalistische Bewegung, Kampagnen, Klassenbewusstsein, Mütter, Nachbarschaftsbewegung, Neue Soziale Bewegungen, Pariser Kommune, Parteien, Russische Revolution, Selbstbestimmung, Sozialstaat, Staatssozialismus, Suffragetten, Wahlen, Wahlrecht, weibliche Bildung, Zivilgesellschaft

CHAPTER 26

International Relations

A: ʿalāqāt daulīya. – F: relations internationales. – G: internationale Beziehungen. – R: meždunarodnye otnošenija. – S: relaciones internacionales. – C: guójì guānxì 国际关系

Jeremy **Bentham** shaped the modern meaning of the term "international" in 1780 with reference to international law. In the 19th cent., the adjective "international" was mainly used with respect to international trade and the relations between dynasties, nations, and empires. The origins of the theory and practice of IR, however, lie earlier: for example, in the 2500-year-old writings of the Chinese strategist **Sun Tzu** (*The Art of War*) or in **Thucydides**'s work on the Peloponnesian War from 431 to 404 B.C. Another historical source is **Ibn Khaldun**, who, around the year 1400 wrote about the rise and fall of political forms and regional patterns of trade, war, and peace in the Maghreb during the Middle Ages.

The modern understanding of IR was originally conceived as advice to princes and political leaders on how to construct enduring forms of government and social control within their domains or territories in ways connected to strategies of war and peace, with the latter being seen as means of accumulating social power. Thus, IR has tended to be a rather conservative field, since its theories operate largely from the viewpoint and on behalf of established power. The history of ML demonstrates that even theories like Leninism, which originally posed a radical challenge to the existing order, can become pillars of established power, as was the case under **Stalin** (**Carr** 1946).

Especially following the collapse of the SU, Western theorising around IR has been dominated by established scholarship from the Anglo-American world. Critical and dialectical approaches were dismissed as "unscientific" or "ideological". Nonetheless, in an era when the American style "neorealism" has become the dominant orthodoxy, a critical transnational historical materialism is emerging in response. Its neo-Gramscian approach makes it possible to analyse the contradictory relationship between inter-, trans-, and intra-national forces of high-tech capitalism from the perspective of the construction of an alternative transnational social bloc.

1. **Marx** and **Engels** frequently addressed the subject matter. Even if they did not develop a systematic theory of IR, they provide a methodological frame-

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_027
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

work for developing one. Particularly noteworthy are their analyses of war and peace (including peace treaties and the way these reflect the fundamental configurations of power) and of the links between state power, class structure, and the world market as expressions of the expansion of capital.

'[A]ll collisions in history have their origin, according to our view, in the contradiction between the productive forces and the form of intercourse' (*GI*, MECW 5/74 [MEW 3/73]). In the modern era, this contradiction takes the form of a struggle between states in the context of the internationalisation of capital. The international system is principally shaped by those nations that have undergone a fundamental bourgeois revolution and developed powerful capacities for production and destruction. This forces other nations 'on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; [the bourgeoisie] compels them to introduce what it calls civilisation into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves' (*Manifesto*, MECW 6/488 [MEW 4/466]). The dynamics of inter-state rivalry and the development of capital provide the frame for understanding IR in the era of capitalism.

In contrast to bourgeois theory, **Marx** and **Engels** did not make any significant methodological demarcation between the internal and external aspects of power, or between means of production and means of destruction. Instead, they saw the internal and external, the local and the international, the political and the economic as elements of a dialectical relation. **Marx** examines how the modern state obtains a monopoly over the legitimate use of violence, internally, and how this is connected to the external use of organised violence (*C I*, 915 et sq. [MEW 23/779]; see also **Engels**, MECW 26/453 et sqq. [MEW 21/405 et sqq.]). Furthermore, **Marx** was interested in the organic connection between the conditions of warfare and the development of the productive forces: the organised violence of war fostered the development of modern relations of production, including the wage labour form. He even speculates that '[t]he first form in which wages generally appear is military pay' (*Gr*, MECW 28/15 [MEW 42/13]). **Engels** admires **Clausewitz**'s view that warfare was similar to commerce, and assumes that 'the conduct of a war depends on the productivity and means of communication of the army's own hinterland as well as of the theatre of war' (*AD*, MECW 25/159 [MEW 20/159]).

Marx and **Engels** identified the basis of international conflicts in the outward expansion and clash of social forces and class interests, producing historically specific constellations of power and resistance. In *GI* they show the decisive factors of IR: 'The relations of different nations among themselves depend upon the extent to which each has developed its productive forces, the division of labour and internal intercourse. [...] But not only the relation of one nation to others, but also the whole internal structure of the nation

itself depends on the stage of development reached by its production and its internal and external intercourse. How far the productive forces of a nation are developed is shown most manifestly by the degree to which the division of labour has been carried' (MECW 5/32 [MEW 3/21 et sq.]). History can no longer be reduced to the actions of "great statesmen". 'As soon as this active life-process is described, history ceases to be a collection of dead facts, as it is with the empiricists (themselves still abstract), or an imagined activity of imagined subjects, as with the idealists' (37 [27]). Thus they argue that Britain's dominance of the world market was intimately linked with the hegemony of the bourgeoisie within Britain, despite the fact that it was the aristocracy that carried out British foreign policy (MECW 12/341 et sqq. [MEW 9/353 et sqq.]). The fundamental goal of British strategy was to maintain and extend its dominance of the world's oceans and of world trade and production. Its policy of a balance of power on the European continent (MECW 8/211 et sq. [MEW 6/146 et sq.]), the colonisation of America and India (*C I*, 931 et sqq. [MEW 23/792 et sqq.]), and the establishment and control of the international gold standard were all part of this strategy (*CCPE*, MECW 29/385 et sqq. [MEW 13/128 et sqq.]). In the ideology of free trade imperialism, as formulated by Adam **Smith** among others, **Marx** sees an idealisation and rationalisation of Britain's economic superiority into a supposed global harmony of interests that would lead to the prosperity of all nations (MECW 11/333 et sq. [MEW 8/342 et sq.]; see **Engels**, MECW 27/315 et sqq. [MEW 2/643 et sqq.]).

Under the conditions of industrial production, world trade becomes a medium for both the internationalisation of capital and the spread of technologies and advanced means of production. Mercantile capital takes on a mediating function without changing the mode of production, while industrial capital shapes a new mode of production and of life. Nevertheless, mercantile capitalism is the historical precondition for the accumulation of large sums of capital. The plunderings by the Dutch and British, especially by the East India Company, which protected its "trade" with an independent military force, shapes the brutal face of colonialism (MECW 12/148 et sqq., also 94 et sq., 217 et sqq. [MEW 9/148 et sqq., also 96 et sq., 220 et sqq.]). Nevertheless, **Marx** attributes to Great Britain a dialectical historical role in India and Asia, which one might call "enlightened barbarism": it violently destroys the old order while at the same time generating political resistance and the conditions for the development of a new, higher civilisation (see 217 et sqq. [220 et sqq.]). Marx looks at the two Opium Wars of 1839–42 and 1857–59 (see 94 et sq. [96 et sq.]), in the wake of which a "progressive underdevelopment" prevailed (see **van der Pijl** 1989, 80 et sqq.), in a similar manner.

Foreign policy and the so-called "national interest" are based on the pursuit of the ruling classes to strengthen their social power in the light of the

consolidation and expansion of the prevailing mode of production: according to **Engels**, the liberal economic system '[b]y dissolving nationalities [...] had done its best to universalise enmity' (*Outlines*, MECW 3/423 [MEW 1/504]). **Marx** points out: 'The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe' (*Manifesto*, MECW 6/487 [MEW 4/465]). International power ultimately has its origin in the alienation and appropriation of labour power and the products of labour – just as, on the other hand, '[i]n proportion as the exploitation of one individual by another is put an end to, the exploitation of one nation by another will also be put an end to' (503 [479]).

From **Marx**'s perspective, the prospects for overcoming the capitalist mode of production are tied to its full development: thus communism requires global commerce and the universal development of productive forces, and will thus itself be international in form. 'The result is: the tendentially and *δυνάμει* universal development of the productive forces – of wealth in general – as a basis, likewise the universality of intercourse, hence also the world market as basis [...] of the universal development of the individuals' (*Gr*, MECW 28/465 [MEW 42/447]). With the development of the world market comes the growing 'annihilation of space by means of time' (463 [430]). Capital relation thus transforms production in a new international division of labour. While free trade paves the way for the freedom of capital, capitalist development promotes universal interdependence and undermines the seclusion of different nationalities and dynastic orders. Capital becomes world capital, 'history becomes world history' (*GI*, MECW 5/51 [MEW 3/45]); revolution, while breaking out locally, becomes world revolution; and historically speaking, revolutions are preceded by economic crises.

The fear of revolution acts as a mediating and constraining moment of state rivalry (see MECW 22/354 [MEW 17/361]). Thus, the Crimean War (1853–56) is conceived not only as a clash amongst the great powers, but also as a conflict within society between rulers and ruled. **Marx** scoffs at the fact that the British and French bourgeoisie hoped from this war that 'the conservative millennium will dawn and the aggregate force of the Governments be allowed to direct itself exclusively to the "tranquilization" of the European mind' (10 July 1855, MECW 14/284; also 12/163 [MEW 11/306; also 9/164]). At the same time, however, the Crimean War points to larger and more violent conflicts in the future. Marx and **Engels** also use the lens of class analysis to interpret the American Secession and Civil War (1860–65), and regard it as a clash between two different modes of production: industrial capitalism in the North and the plantation/slaveholding society of the South (MECW 19/43 et sqq. [MEW 15/339 et sqq.]). The American Civil War, because of its mass mobilisation, was the first

great war in modern history, which, according to **Marx**, rings 'the tocsin [...] for the European working class' (*C I*, 91 [MEW 23/15]). The Franco-Prussian war of 1870 also seemed to confirm the existence of a 'seventh Great Power' (**Engels**, MECW 24/190 [MEW 19/101]): after Prussia's victory under **Bismarck**, the forces of reaction within Europe united in a 'Holy Alliance' (MECW 8/211 [MEW 6/146]) against the IWA: 'after the most tremendous war of modern times, the conquering and the conquered hosts should fraternize for the common massacre of the proletariat – this unparalleled event does indicate, not, as Bismarck thinks, the final repression of a new society upheaving, but the crumbling into dust of bourgeois society. [...] Class rule is no longer able to disguise itself in a national uniform; the national Governments are *one* as against the proletariat!' (**Marx**, *Civil War*, MECW 22/353 et sq. [MEW 17/360 et sq.]; see **Engels**, MECW 23/629 [MEW 7/540]) However, the alliance collapsed after the defeat of the Paris Commune in 1871. Given the way mass armies and new weapons technologies revolutionised warfare, a new war would bring unprecedented destruction, drive the working classes towards socialism, and, Engels hoped, put an end to all dynastic power and reactionary forces (1892, MECW 27/245 [MEW 22/256]). The First World War contradicted theses hopes – while it brought the ousting of the old feudal classes and the end of England's hegemony, and it furthered the Russian Revolution of 1917, the split of the working class along national and other lines could not be overcome at all.

2. *Realism and Neorealism*. – The Peace of Westphalia of 1648 ended the Thirty Years' War, which was both the last religious and the first modern secular war. This treaty has shaped the liberal vocabulary of statecraft and "realpolitik". Edward **Morse** (1976) and Martin **Wight** (1977) trace the "myth of Westphalia" back to three basic assumptions: first, that the highest political good was order, which could only be realised in political society (the state); second, that states coexisted with others in a pre-political condition of anarchy; finally, that from a historical perspective, the king, by the grace of God, is the architect of the modern state as well as of geopolitics. The Westphalian order, however, was the geopolitical expression of the power and structure of ruling dynasties in 17th-cent. Europe, associated with absolutism as much as with the idea of empire.

As a result, neo-/realism tends to be a-historical: starting from the axiomatic Westphalian order, it focuses on the strategic interactions of nation states rather than different state forms which correspond to different ensembles of social relations and modes of production. The central assumption of this approach is that states seek power and security and their leaders are motivated by greed and fear in a millennia-old basic structure that approximates the **Hob-**

besian state of nature (see **Gilpin** 1981). Geopolitics is thus defined by an endless struggle between conflicting wills of individual states under pre-political conditions of international anarchy. According to Kenneth **Waltz** 'internationally the ends of security and decency' can therefore best be served by 'a balance-of-power regime' (1986, 341). The basic unit of analysis is the state, and states are considered to be territorial entities which are structurally similar across time and space and which act according to a clearly defined national interest, albeit within certain constraints such as the international balance of powers. Security is seen as a zero-sum game: thus, more security for one state must mean less security for another – though many are quick to acknowledge that nuclear weapons may mean less security for *all* states (**Bull** 1995). The success of state policy is assessed by the extent to which it reduces vulnerability, maximises security, and increases the relative prosperity of the nation. Cooperation between states is seen as worthwhile when it maximises own relative gains vis-à-vis other states.

The liberal perspective, as exemplified in **Ricardo**'s foreign trade theory, is similarly state-centric and a-historical. It interprets IR in terms of the institutional interplay between states and markets, whereby these are conceived as outcomes of individual action within a broader legal framework (**Buchanan**/**Tullock** 1962; **Hayek** 1967). Its main difference from realism lies in its emphasis on *absolute* welfare gains (**Keohane** 1984): the moment of rivalry takes a second place here to stress enlightened inter-state cooperation (**Humphrey** 1985) – a perspective rooted not least in **Kant**'s reflections on perpetual peace.

Neo-/realists focus on the balance of power, and often see phases of historical change as underpinned by a basic structural continuity, affecting cycles characterised by a shift in power relations and the rise and fall of empires (**Gilpin** 1981). Stable, cooperative, and relatively peaceful international systems are associated with "hegemonic" dominance, and power monopolies are considered a more stable balance of power than those forms involving a larger number of more or less equally strong states (29). **Waltz**, on the other hand, emphasises the superior stability of a bipolar structure (1979, 161 et sq.). The balance of power between states – not the development of ideology or even modes of production – thus represents the crucial moment for the change and stability of world orders.

2.1 A further development within the realist school is the 'theory of hegemonic stability' advanced by Charles **Kindleberger** (1973) to explain the world economic crisis of the 1930s. According to this theory, Great Britain, the leading world economic power until then, was willing to provide the "public good" of international monetary stability, but it already lacked the economic strength

to do so. The USA, on the other hand, had enough power, but were not yet ready to take on the role of the new "hegemon" and act as the world economic leader – something the USA would only do so after the Second World War. Given this constellation, it is assumed that a liberal world economic order generally requires a hegemonic leading power: 'for the world economy to be stabilized, there has to be [...] one stabilizer' (305). Robert **Gilpin** (1987) fears that with the decline of the hegemon, the liberal world economic order will disintegrate as well.

2.2 Regime theory, a hybrid of neorealist and liberal-institutionalist approaches, examines how international institutions facilitate cooperation between states by modifying their aspirations through the regulation of specific policy areas (such as trade or environmental policy) and by promoting of the mutual exchange of information (see **Krasner** 1983; **Kohler-Koch** 1989). Some varieties of this theory use *rational-choice* and mathematical game-theoretical approaches to calculate the probability of cooperation given different strategies of the "players". A frequent point of reference is the so-called prisoner's dilemma, which examines the extent to which a strategy of reciprocity furthers international cooperation (**Axelrod/Dawkins** 1990). Research on regime theory began to take off in the 1970s, when the theory of hegemonic stability spread concern in the USA about the loss of the country's hegemony and its consequences for the world economic order (**Keohane** 1984). – Instead of the decline of the USA, the *real* loss of power took place in the SU – before it broke down due to internal contradictions and the challenges of a transnationally reorganised high-tech mode of production.

The collapse of the SU took the protagonists of bourgeois IR theories by complete surprise. But with the "victory of economic and political liberalism" shortly thereafter, Francis **Fukuyama** announced the "end of history": 'the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government' (1989, 4). Strategic thinking in the USA was now primarily concerned with the question of how to deal with the unprecedented hegemonic "burden" of unchallenged power and how to defend against potential challengers (see **Krauthammer** 1990/91; **Huntington** 1999). However, such considerations were shaken by the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, which brought non-state actors and non-territorial forms of networked power into the picture. The way of thinking shared by the US government and its organic intellectuals nevertheless remains shaped by the Westphalian myth, which identifies organised violence with sovereign states. Accordingly, the so-called "War on Terror" was directed against *states* – namely, Afghanistan and Iraq. At the same time, the USA gave expression to its ambi-

tion to exercise global dominance over the entire spectrum of military, political, and economic means of power (see **Kagan** 2002).

3. "Transnational historical materialism" is inspired by **Marx** and Antonio **Gramsci**, but also draws from Fernand **Braudel**, Karl **Polanyi** a.o. Building on the CPE, it stresses the connection between political action and structural changes within specific world orders. For Robert **Cox**, the key units of analysis are not simply states, but social forces, i.e. ideas (ideologies and theories), institutions (such as the market and the state), and 'material capabilities' (of production and destruction) (1981, 136). These forces operate at three interrelated (analytical) levels: that of world order, that of the interrelation of state and civil society, and the basic level of the social relations of production and reproduction (127). The dynamics of social forces lead to the formation of national and transnational class fractions as well as (transnational) historical blocs which give direction to specific forms of state (**Gill** 1993, 261). In this view, the great powers have the maximum degree of external autonomy, while the subordinate states are penetrated by them in many ways.

In terms of what **Gramsci** has called 'passive revolution' (*SPN*, N. 22, §1 et sq., 279 et sqq.), the hegemonic project of the leading nation expands internationally and subjugates the subaltern states and social forces to its power and influence. A world hegemony originates from the external expansion of an internal or national hegemony established by the ruling class within the most powerful state (**Cox** 1993, 61). Hegemonic leadership occurs when international arrangements are characterised not only by coercion, but also by winning the consent of the key allies and supporters of the ruling class of the dominated states by taking their interests into account. Another characteristic of a hegemonic situation is that the major institutions, forms of social organisation, and key values of the dominant state become universal models for emulation in subordinate states. However, in periods of crisis, the apparatus of hegemony tends to show fissures. Political parties fragment, none of the individual groups or classes can obtain the broad consensus necessary to govern. This situation is ripe for a shift in the social balance of forces and power. – The state is in no way denied its relevance: it remains the decisive aspect in IR and at the same time the place where the hegemony of class (fractions) emerges (64). However, the state must be conceived in a more complex way than in realism, namely as an 'integral state': 'political society + civil society, that is, hegemony protected by the armor of coercion' (**Gramsci**, *PN* 3, N. 6, §88, 75).

3.1 In contrast to realism, which views order as a normative goal of political action, from the perspective of transnational historical materialism, the

term "world order" does not necessarily imply stability or a desirable set of international arrangements. It seeks principally to provide an analytical representation of the cross-border configurations of social forces, relations, and institutions that are characteristic of a particular historical epoch. Thus, world *orders* can be very violent and chaotic periods, such as the Thirty Years' War or the period from 1914–1945. Both periods are characterised by a disintegration of the very societal structures that limit the exercise of organised violence – in this respect they represent non-hegemonic orders in the Gramscian sense. Between 1815–1914, during the so-called "Hundred Years' Peace" after the defeat of **Napoleon**, there was no war between great powers, despite all the suppression of revolts, of revolutions, regional conflicts and wars, as well as colonial and imperial expansion that took place. The *Pax Britannica* could therefore be described as hegemonic at least until the middle of the 19th cent.; but erosion of this hegemony is marked by the era of imperialist rivalry. Despite over 200 "local", "regional" or civil wars that have taken place since 1945, during the *Pax Americana*, no violent conflict between great powers has occurred.

The formation of world orders is a complex and historically fluid process. Towards the end of the Thirty Years' War, calls for "order" and a reduction of interstate violence are heard among the rulers, if only to ensure their own survival and secure their position of power within their own territory. The Peace of Westphalia provides the new theoretical and ideological framework of "sovereignty" to allow dynastic power, rule, and legitimacy to be re-established both within and between the emerging states and empires – based on a mercantilist political economy that sets trade surpluses as its goal. The political basis of this rule is narrow: about 90 % of the population is excluded from the fruits of the developing capitalist market society as well as from political representation and participation. The establishment of the new world order owes much to the superior power resources of the United Netherlands, both in the field of war and weapons technologies and in terms of Amsterdam's leading role in trade and finance, from which emerges the core of those class forces striving for transnational dominance. This era can thus be understood as an early phase in the emergence and hegemonic articulation of transnational bourgeois power – a process that only began to fully unfold its dynamic in the course of the 19th cent. (**van der Pijl** 1998).

The modern IR are essentially a product of the period between the Treaty of Utrecht (1713) and the Congress of Vienna (1815): this period saw a shift in the logic of international political action away from the concept of realm and from inter-dynastic rivalry towards modern political sovereignty and capitalist socialisation. In the absolutist system, international politics involved principles of "political accumulation" in terms of investment in the means of violent

appropriation. The goal was to use war to assert dynastic claims to territories as well as to commercial monopolies and trade routes – or to use marriage between the various princely and royal houses in order to proceed less bloodily. With the new order comes a shift from the feudalist rent-regime to capitalist accumulation based on wage labour, first in Holland, later in England. Forms of personalised sovereignty and rule are replaced by depersonalised and centralised political power in the capitalist state. Since class power in capitalism is rooted in the control of the means of production, the state intervenes less directly in production, confines itself largely to securing private property and the enforcement of civil contracts, and concentrates on maintaining internal social order as well as external defence (**Teschke** 2002, 31).

In the 18th cent., Great Britain emerged to dominate and develop the world market especially thanks to its supremacy in trade, industry, and at sea. In 1850, however, **Marx** and **Engels** noted that Britain sowed the seeds of its own relative economic and political decline as a result of its export of over-accumulated capital to the USA, anticipating the latter's rise. Behind this is the assumption of a specific development pattern: a declining power exports capital in the direction of a more vigorous competitor, where the rate of return on capital is higher than at home, just as Holland previously transferred capital to England and in this way financed its development. Moreover, the USA, as the only fully developed bourgeois republic at the time, offered a uniquely high level of protection for private property and investments, which was attractive to foreign investors. For a while, however, Britain tried to defend its primacy through exploitation and siphoning off surplus value within its empire, especially India. The institutionalisation of British hegemony involved the other great powers agreeing to the rules of international trade and finance set by the City of London, especially with regard to the establishment of the international gold standard by the Bank of England. This new imperial order did not simply rest upon preponderant power. Rather, it reflected a new balance of inter-state and class forces that simultaneously established a global "racial" hierarchy and incorporated sections of the working classes into imperialist projects.

With the industrialisation and militarisation of Germany, Japan, the USA, and to a lesser extent Russia, the age of imperial rivalry dawned at the end of the 19th cent. Economic concentration, protectionism, and the renewal of violent forms of colonisation were paradoxically built on a gradual expansion of the basis of political rule, which now also included the "labour aristocracy". Mass production, mass communication, mass parties, and universal ideologies emerged, generating the capacity for total mobilisation and war (**Hobsbawm** 1987). The First World War and the Russian Revolution mark the decline of the Eurocentric world order, despite the (ultimately futile) attempts to reinstate its

institutional form with the League of Nations in the 1920s. Mexico and China show that the historical phenomenon of revolution is not limited to Europe. The final demise of the old order ultimately occurs with the collapse of the liberal world economy in the 1930s, which fostered the rise of fascism and Nazism as new forms of reaction and which consummated in the tragedy of the Second World War.

3.2 After the Second World War, following decolonisation and the collapse of the SU, the number of formally independent states increased sharply. However, if the quality of changing forms of state is analysed instead of the quantity, it becomes evident that the pressure of a 'disciplinary neoliberalism' (**Gill** 1995, 413 et sq.) has accelerated the internationalisation, or transnationalisation of the state. The internationalisation process itself is not new: even the Westphalian system can be understood as an international political form of merchant capitalism in transition to industrial capitalism. The bipolarity of the superpowers in the Cold War with its balance of terror also involves specific forms of internationalisation of political and security structures in the context of the two coalitions (see **Kaldor** 1992). But to accept the idea of the internationalisation or even globalisation of the state is to go beyond the traditional assumption of IR: that states, almost irrespective of their historically concrete form, can be regarded as the starting point for the analysis of international politics. From an historical-materialist point of view, it is necessary to analyse how different forms of states change in the historical process and thus contribute to the emergence of different types of world order. In this respect, **Gramsci**'s concept of the 'state in an organic and wider sense' (*FS*, N. 6, §87, 18), understood as the integral connection of 'apparatus of government' and '"private" apparatus of "hegemony" or civil society' (*AGR*, N. 6, §137, 234), is a suitable means of conceptualising the formation of a global political. The term IR itself refers to ways of thinking that are now inadequate for analysing global structural change at the beginning of the 21st cent. The dynamics of IR are determined by the acceleration of flows of capital and information, the spread of highly developed technological powers of production, destruction, and control, as well as the globalisation of relations of social intercourse. The increasing development of mechanisms of surveillance and control is a necessary expression of growing social tensions and the corresponding potentials for violence and resistance – not least by transnational terror networks (**Gill** 2003).

Under pressure from the USA and the G7, and because of the constraints of economic conditions, more and more states are adopting liberal constitutional forms and policies friendly to business interests. Especially since the collapse

of the SU, the economic dimension of the world order has largely come to be dominated by the power of capital – in the form of giant transnational corporations which increasingly control the bulk of the world's productive assets and capital flows and drive global polarisation. Capital can thereby more effectively limit the influence of organised labour and the redistributive elements of the state.

Both on the basis of its business transactions and through involvement in policy forums such as the Trilateral Commission or the World Economic Forum, a nascent transnational capitalist class fraction is developing its own networks and 'organic intellectuals' (**Gramsci**). Kees **van der Pijl** (1998) shows that the lineage of transnational bourgeois class formation can be traced back to the 18th-cent. Enlightenment. In turn, an increasingly relevant political problem of the present day is the creation of a transnational counter-hegemonic bloc. One major obstacle to achieving this possibility may be that the political imagination of the left remains trapped in a framework in which political action is restricted to notions of territoriality and the state – even though the limitations and possibilities of a *globalised* world order are already palpable (**Gill** 1997). While pessimism is appropriate in the face of globalisation in its neoliberal-disciplinary form, the 'postmodern prince' (Gill 2000) of the alter-globalisation "movement of movements" – whose differential form of political action has abandoned centralised models, emphasised the unity of the planet and justice, and goes beyond **Gramsci**'s 'modern prince' – allows for a certain optimism. Its principles of action are based in local conditions, problems, and opportunities, but are connected to the creation of a transnational, collective organic intellectual of global progressive forces on the move.

Stephen Gill
Translated by Hunter Bolin

Bibliography

R.M. **Axelrod**, R. **Dawkins**, *The Evolution of Co-Operation*, Harmondsworth 1990.

J. **Bentham**, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1780), ed. J.H. Burns, H.L.A. Hart, Oxford 1996.

F. **Braudel**, *On History*, Chicago 1980.

F. **Braudel**, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th–18th Century*, 3 vols., New York 1982.

J. **Buchanan**, G. **Tullock**, *The Calculus of Consent: Logical Foundations of Constitutional Democracy*, Ann Arbor 1962.

H. **Bull**, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*, Houndmills et al. 1995.

E.H. **Carr**, *The Twenty Years' Crisis 1919–1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations*, London 1946.

R.W. **Cox**, 'Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, vol. 10, 1981, no. 2, 116–55.

R.W. **Cox**, 'Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations: An Essay in Method', S. Gill (ed.), *Gramsci, Historical Materialism and International Relations*, Cambridge 1993, 49–66.

F. **Fukuyama**, 'The End of History?', *The National Interest*, 1989, no. 16, 3–18.

S. **Gill**, 'Neoliberalism and the Shift Towards a US-centred Hegemony', H. Overbeek (ed.), *Restructuring Hegemony in the Global Political Hegemony*, London-New York 1993, 246–82.

S. **Gill**, 'Globalisation, Market Civilisation, and Disciplinary Neoliberalism', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, vol. 24, 1995, no. 3, 399–423.

S. **Gill**, 'Transformation and Innovation in the Study of World Order', S. Gill, J.H. Mittelman (eds.), *Innovation and Transformation in International Studies*, Cambridge-New York 1997, 5–24.

S. **Gill**, 'Toward a Postmodern Prince? The Battle in Seattle as a Moment in the New Politics of Globalisation', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, vol. 29, 2000, no. 1, 131–40.

S. **Gill**, 'Übermacht und Überwachungsmacht im globalen Kapitalismus', *Argument* 249, vol. 45, 2003, 21–33.

R. **Gilpin**, *War and Change in World Politics*, Cambridge 1981.

R. **Gilpin**, *The Political Economy of International Relations*, Princeton 1987.

F.A. **Hayek**, *Studies in Philosophy, Politics and Economics*, Chicago 1967.

E.J. **Hobsbawm**, *The Age of Empire 1875–1914*, New York 1987.

T. **Humphrey**, 'Translator's Introduction', I. Kant, *Perpetual Peace, and Other Essays on Politics, History, and Morals*, Indianapolis 1985.

S.P. **Huntington**, 'The Lonely Superpower', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 78, 1999, no. 2, 35–49.

R. **Kagan**, 'Power and Weakness', *Policy Review*, 2002, no. 113, 3–28.

M. **Kaldor**, *The Imaginary War: Understanding the East-West Conflict*, Cambridge (MA) 1990.

G.F. **Kennan**, *Decline of the West? G. Kennan and his Critics*, ed. M.F. Herz, Washington 1978.

R.O. **Keohane**, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*, Princeton 1984.

Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, Princeton 1969.

C.P. **Kindleberger**, *The World in Depression, 1929–1939*, London 1973.

B. **Kohler-Koch** (ed.), *Regime in den internationalen Beziehungen*, Baden-Baden 1989.

S.D. **Krasner** (ed.), *International Regimes*, Ithaca-London 1983.

C. **Krauthammer**, 'The Unipolar Moment', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 70, 1990/91, no. 1, 23–33.

H.J. **Morgenthau**, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, New York 1985.

E.L. **Morse**, *Modernization and the Transformation of International Relations*, London-New York 1976.

K. **van der Pijl**, 'Marx and Engels on International Relations', *Amsterdam International Studies*, Working Paper No. 11, Amsterdam 1989.

K. **van der Pijl**, *Transnational Classes and International Relations*, London-New York 1998.

K. **Polanyi**, *The Great Transformation* (1944), Boston (MA) 2001.

B. **Teschke**, 'Theorising the Westphalian System of States: International Relations from Absolutism to Capitalism', *European Journal of International Relations*, vol. 8, 2002, no. 1, 5–48.

K.N. **Waltz**, *Theory of International Politics*, New York 1979.

K.N. **Waltz**, 'Reflections on Theory of International Politics: A Response to my Critics', R.O. Keohane (ed.), *Neorealism and Its Critics*, New York 1986, 322–45.

M. **Wight**, *Systems of State*, Leicester 1977.

→ bourgeoisie/middle classes, class in itself/for itself, Cold War, colonialism, commercial relations, cooperation, critique of globalisation, decolonisation, dominating class/ruling class, domination/rule, empire, end of history, feudalism, finance capital, form of the state/form of government, fractions of capital, free trade, geopolitics, globalisation, Gramscianism, hegemony, high-technological mode of production, historical bloc, imperialism, integral state, interior/exterior, international civil society, international division of labour, international political economy, internationalisation of the state, internationalism, mercantile capital, mercantilism, military, mode of production, nation, nation state, national interests, neoliberalism, order, Paris Commune, passive revolution, periodisation of history, polarisation, power, productive force, relation of forces, revolution, secret diplomacy, security, state, system competition, terrorism, trade, transnational capitalism, transnational corporations, underdevelopment, violence/power, war and peace, world economy, world market, world money, world revolution, world war, world system

→ Bourgeoisie, Ende der Geschichte, Entkolonialisierung, Feudalismus, Finanzkapital, Freihandel, Geheimdiplomatie, Geopolitik, geschichtlicher Block, Gewalt, Globalisierung, Globalisierungskritik, Gramscismus, Handel, Handelskapital, Hegemonie, Herrschaft, herrschende Klassen, hochtechnologische Produktionsweise, Imperialismus, Imperium, innen/außen, integraler Staat, internationale Arbeitsteilung, internationale politische Ökonomie, internatio-

nale Zivilgesellschaft, Internationalisierung des Staates, Internationalismus, Kalter Krieg, Kapitalfraktionen, Klasse an sich/für sich, Kolonialismus, Kooperation, Kräfteverhältnisse, Krieg und Frieden, Macht, Merkantilismus, Militär, Nation, nationales Interesse, Nationalstaat, Neoliberalismus, Ordnung, Pariser Kommune, passive Revolution, Periodisierung der Geschichte, Polarisierung, Produktionsweise, Produktivkräfte, Revolution, Sicherheit, Staat, Staatsform / Regierungsform, Systemkonkurrenz, Terrorismus, transnationale Konzerne, transnationaler Kapitalismus, Unterentwicklung, Verkehrsverhältnisse, Weltgeld, Weltkrieg, Weltmarkt, Weltrevolution, Weltsystem, Weltwirtschaft

CHAPTER 27

Labour Movement

A: ḥaraka ʿummālīya. – F: mouvement ouvrier. – G: Arbeiterbewegung. – R: rabočee dviženie. – S: movimiento de los trabajadores. – C: gōngrén yùndòng 工人运动

1. **Engels**'s early work *The Condition of the Working-Class in England* from 1845 contains a longer section titled 'LM S' (MECW 4/501–29 [MEW 2/430–55]). Here, different stages of the representation of the interests of wage earners are mentioned which are found in later writings by **Marx** and **Engels**: from reflexive individual acts of criminality through collective Luddism to political organisation – in this case Chartism – and, partly distinct from this, 'socialism' (as a political orientation, not as a mode of production). Social revolution is already mentioned as a historical tendency at this point. The descriptions of working and living conditions (outside the chapter 'LM S') contain detailed information about the everyday life of working people.

In 1844, in his *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law*, **Marx** had introduced the proletariat as a historical-philosophical entity (MECW 3/186 [MEGA I.2/182; MEW 1/390]), but in contrast to **Engels** still without empirical evidence. The theory of stages in the development of proletarian organisation outlined in Engels's *Condition* is found again in the section 'Strikes and Combinations of Workers' in **Marx**'s *The Poverty of Philosophy* (1847, MECW 6/206–12 [MEW 4/175–82]) and in the *Manifesto* (1848, 6/492 [4/470]). In the description of the prehistory of organisation it is now empirically fleshed out: the reality of the "elementary" LM is found in the presentation of reflexes of resistance.

There is still hardly any conceptual distinction between the party and trade unions. Until 1848, **Marx** and **Engels** use the term "party" in the sense of "faction". In the subsequent period as well, party and trade unions continue to be for them manifestations of a uniform movement which changes shape according to the change in its tasks, according to the stage reached in the class struggle.

For **Marx**, trade unions were indispensable instruments of self-defence in order to prevent the price of the commodity of labour power from falling below its value, but they failed 'generally from limiting themselves to a guerrilla war against the effects of the existing system, instead of simultaneously trying to change it, instead of using their organised forces as a lever for the final emancipation of the working class, that is to say, the ultimate abolition of the wages system' (*Value*, 20/149 [16/152]). To the extent that the struggle takes on

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_028
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

a political character, the proletarian movement becomes a political party, the concrete structure of which Marx and **Engels** make no definitive statements about.

The 'Communist League' that they founded in 1847 was the continuation of an older organisation, the 'League of the Just', and bore the characteristics of this earlier group rather than having been institutionally reorganised by them. The innovation occurred exclusively in the programmatic field. (The statutes of the 'Communist League' met the needs of the moment and did not make theoretical claims beyond that.)

A second organisation that **Marx** and **Engels** played a major role in was the 'International Workingmen's Association' (referred to as the 'First International' in retrospect, 1864–1876). The IWA was a combination of groups that were very different, both ideologically and formally – from British trade unions to followers of **Proudhon**, **Fourier**, and **Blanqui** in France to the anarchist orientation of the Russian émigré **Bakunin**. Despite these differences, **Marx**, in the vaguely defined sense typical of him in the political-organisational field, clearly attributed the quality of a party to it. In contrast to **Bakunin**'s attempts to gather his own followers in an autonomous special organisation within the International, **Marx** and **Engels** emphasised the rights of the 'General Council', though this should not be misunderstood as a fundamental commitment to "centralism". For them, it was obviously on the one hand a consideration of situational expediency, and on the other hand an orientation in dealing with an opposition that not only – as was undoubtedly the case with **Bakunin** – espoused fundamentally decentralised notions of organisation but was also forced to act against the leadership body because the majority of it was occupied by its opponents. In Germany, **Marx** and **Engels** criticised the hierarchical organisational structure, fixated upon a political leader, of the 'General German Workers' Association' founded by **Lassalle** in 1863 (see **Marx**'s letter to **von Schweitzer**, 43/132–35 [32/568–71]). They had already formulated one aspect of organisation in the *Manifesto* that they later always retained as essential: internationalism. They regarded their 'parties' as internationally constituted.

The historical materialism worked out by **Marx** and **Engels** is – as they both noted themselves – indebted to **Hegel**'s philosophy, classical political economy, and the contemporary socialist movement (cf. *Utopian*, 24/281–325 [19/177–228]). At the same time, it is a product of the Industrial Revolution. Their ideas about organisation were shaped by contemporary experience: to them, LM was essentially a loosely structured mass movement along the lines of the British Chartists or the unions. Specifically socialist organisations were propaganda societies, which sought to influence these LMs without ever being able to be identical with them. Here, the French LM provided a second model of organ-

isation. In contrast to the later mass parties, these were often secret societies (as was the 'Communist League'). The IWA loosely gathered together both types of organisation.

After the Industrial Revolution, mass social democratic parties emerged alongside the trade unions while remaining closely connected with them. Important reasons for this were the increasing importance of parliamentarism for legislation concerning issues affecting the working and living conditions of the proletariat, as well as the internal consolidation of the capitalist mode of production, which made its revolutionary overthrow unlikely in the short term and suggested long-term political activity aimed at improving the working and living conditions. In their writings that originated in the context of the European revolutions of 1848 and the engagement with Bonapartism, **Marx** and **Engels** – especially under the impression of the French referendums – considered workers' participation in elections counterproductive.

A change of mind that occurred later is documented by **Engels**'s 1895 introduction to **Marx**'s *Class Struggles*. Here, participation in elections and parliaments and other representative bodies (e.g. commercial courts to which businessmen and wage workers sent delegates to represent their interests) is understood as a means of gathering and counting one's own forces, with the activity in the German Reichstag at the same time, for example, being viewed as making use of a 'platform' (27/516 [22/519]).

The small propaganda society of yesteryear is sublated in the mass social democratic party. **Engels** in particular paid close attention to its development with regard to two aspects: first, the reception of Marxism among the membership. His correspondence with **Bebel** contains numerous concerned remarks about the danger of a reformist 'opportunism'. Second, **Engels** placed great importance on internal party democracy, especially on unimpeded freedom of expression within the organisation. He spoke about this with special emphasis in 1891 on the occasion of the publication of the *Critique of the Gotha Program*, penned by **Marx** in 1875 (cf. 49/181 et sq. [38/94 et sq.]).

2.1 After the Industrial Revolution, trade unions and social democratic parties were characterised by a stronger orientation towards the nation state, whereas previously outside of Great Britain their sphere of influence was frequently limited to the local and regional, which – skipping the national component, so to speak – facilitated an internationalist orientation. Protective tariff policies, imperialist expansion, and social welfare legislation now constituted the fixed framework for the respective national LMs. The 'First International' had still been conceived of as a uniform organisation. From 1889 on, it was replaced by the 'International Socialist Congresses', that is to say, meetings of organisa-

tions that were independent in their relations among each other. It was only in 1900 that the association called the 'Second International' – a designation that was only approximately appropriate in light of the above – set up permanent bodies, the 'International Socialist Bureau' and the 'Interparliamentary Committee'. The topics of the congresses prove how strongly state action determined the reactions and initiatives of the participating parties and unions: first labour protections (above all, the demand for an eight-hour day guaranteed by law) and then, increasingly from the turn of the century on, the question of war and peace.

The 'Second International' did not just encompass Marxist organisations. The British trade unions, the Independent Labour Party founded in 1893 and later the Labour Party stood outside this tradition just as much as the Blanquists and syndicalists in France, but they belonged to the socialist movement. The liberal and Christian trade unions remained on the outside. An intensive reception of Marxism by leading cadres, reflected in the party programmes, became visible in the Austrian (Hainfeld Programme of 1888) and German (Erfurt Programme of 1891) social democratic parties. However, the revolutionary perspective which was thus elevated to an official party position, as it were, was called into question by the comparatively peaceful development of a capitalism undergoing consolidation. The resulting doubts were articulated from 1896 on in the German Social Democratic Party by Eduard **Bernstein.** His 'revisionism' saw the LM as an instrument not of revolution, but rather of the political and social permeation (parliamentarism, municipal politics, labour law, social policy) of bourgeois society by the interests of the organised proletariat. This view reflected a rapidly expanding practice (especially of the trade unions and of local politicians and those involved in cooperative ventures) but was not able to impose itself at the programmatic level. In the 'revisionism debate', Karl **Kautsky** and Rosa **Luxemburg** in particular advocated the radical Marxist position.

After the turn of the century, differences emerged within the anti-revisionist majority: **Luxemburg** demanded the application of a conception aiming at radical transformation in what she regarded as a pre-revolutionary situation, primarily through political mass strike. **Kautsky**, in contrast, did not see a current possibility and necessity for action. This combination of orthodox Marxist theory and the renunciation of drafting a revolutionary strategy for the immediate present and near future was the characteristic of the third current between reformism and the radical left: 'centrism'.

2.2 *Bolshevism / Menshevism* – The development of the LM in Russia was shaped by the specifics of the Czarist Empire, which deviated considerably from the

situation in Central and Western Europe. It was still in the process of the Industrial Revolution, which had already been completed in the West. The political system was absolutist and differed in this respect even from the monarchies of Germany and Austria-Hungary which at least had a constitution. The political LM was illegal and bore some of the features of the clandestine circles and groups of Western European socialism prior to the establishment of the mass social democratic parties. In 1903, the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (founded in Minsk in 1898) split at a party congress held in exile, first in Brussels and then in London. The Bolsheviks, under the leadership of Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, called **Lenin**, restricted party membership to active cadres ('professional revolutionaries') and adopted the organisational principle of 'democratic centralism': on the basis of resolutions and elections to be carried out from the bottom up, the subordinate party units were obligated to carry out joint decisions, as well as operational instructions from the leadership, in a disciplined way. The Mensheviks (**Axelrod**, **Dan**, **Plekhanov**), in contrast, insisted upon a more open form of organisation. The third point of difference by which the now emerging 'Bolshevism' distinguished itself was the relationship between economic and political struggle: the working class, **Lenin** asserted in 1902 in *What is to Be Done?*, 'exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade-union consciousness' (CW 5/375). The task of the party, in contrast, was to analyse the totality of social relations and draw the political consequences arising from them in theory and practice. 'Class political consciousness can be brought to the workers *only from without*, that is, only from outside the economic struggle, from outside the sphere of relations between workers and employers' (422). Lenin criticised restricting oneself to the conflicts over wages and working hours as 'economism'. He explicitly referred to **Kautsky** in his determination of the relationship between awareness of one's social situation and political class consciousness; he mentioned German social democracy as a role model, though referring in particular to its organisational structure under **Bismarck**'s Anti-Socialist Law (1878–1890), but still with a quite positive assessment of its current state.

Luxemburg sharply criticised **Lenin**'s theory of the party: centralisation would 'restrict the initiative for party thought and erect a barbed-wire fence around the party's capacity for sudden expansion' (*Organizational Questions of Russian Social Democracy*, *RLR*, 256 [GW 1/2, 434]). In the Russian Revolution of 1905/06, in which she participated, she believed to have discovered a different principle: the emergence of new organisations from the direct action of the masses. She directed this observation primarily against the German trade union leaders, who feared the destruction of their associations if political strikes were employed.

2.3 The First World War forced the internal differentiation processes within the LM. The Second International proved to be incapable of action due to the support that the individual governments – with few exceptions – received from the socialist parties of the respective country, and it ceased to exist – not as an organisation but in substance. With the continuation of the war, pacifist oppositions emerged within the social democratic organisations, of which some remained a minority (Germany) while others were able to win over the majority of the party (Austria from 1917). The demand to wage the struggle for socialist revolution amid the catastrophe of war was only raised by minorities: in Germany by the Spartacus Group founded in 1916, and in Russia by the Bolsheviks.

These differences manifested themselves at the international gatherings of the anti-war opposition in Zimmerwald (1915) and Kienthal (1916). **Lenin** agreed with the Spartacus Group on the demand to transform the war into a socialist overthrow but remained isolated in his view that the national social democratic parties and the International needed to be split. In her pamphlet *The Crisis in German Social Democracy* (1916, *RLR*, 312–41 [GW 4, 49–164]), **Luxemburg** had declared recapturing the LM for revolutionary Marxism as an organisational goal. **Lenin** declared that a separation between the reformist and radical parts of the existing organisations was necessary, as they occupied different class positions. This view was founded on Lenin's attempt to determine the causes of reformism socioeconomically: the superprofits of monopoly capital allow imperialism to 'bribe' a part of the working class, the so-called 'labour bureaucracy' (*Imp*, CW 22/194, 282 et sq.). Together with the 'labour aristocracy' and the petite bourgeoisie, which had infiltrated the LM, it constituted a stratum closely linked with the interests of the capitalist class. The revolutionary LM had to split from it. Lenin drew an even sharper dividing line against the centrists. The open supporters of the war had discredited themselves anyway, at least within the anti-war opposition. But in Lenin's view, splitting from the centrists was necessary because they impeded the transformation of the war into a civil war by their insistence on exclusively pacifist positions in an acutely revolutionary situation.

The strictness of **Lenin**'s position derived from his thesis that an immediately revolutionary situation had ripened. This, too, he claimed to be able to prove in his pamphlet on imperialism: inner-capitalist socialisation had advanced so far that the capitalist order was merely a shell that had to be shed, albeit by force.

2.4 With the October Revolution of 1917, the Bolshevik party became the ruling party in Russia. The international LM split permanently over the question of its position towards the Russian Revolution.

In 1918, the Bolsheviks renamed themselves as the 'Russian Communist Party'. The Spartacus Group, which was called the 'Spartacus League' from 1918 on, split from the Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany (USPD) at the end of December 1918 and formed the 'Communist Party of Germany' (KPD) along with other small groups (among others, the 'Bremen Left Radicals'). It saw its task as urgently advancing the socialist revolution in Germany as well. At the founding conference, the former core of the Spartacus League became a minority vis-à-vis representatives of newly politicised, often voluntaristic strata, mainly among soldiers and unskilled workers. The left wing of the USPD that shared this aim went over to the KPD in 1920. The French Communist Party (PCF) split from the Socialist Party of France in 1920 at the party congress in Tours. In 1921, the far left wing of the Italian Socialist Party split from it at the party congress in Livorno and constituted the Communist Party: an especially controversial decision, as staunch Marxists who, among other things, had strongly opposed Italy's participation in the war remained outside.

In 1919, the Communist parties were gathered in the 'Communist International'. It viewed itself as a sort of proletarian world party. Most of the new CPs were small. Besides the French and German CPs, outside of Russia only the Norwegian CP had a broad mass base, but it soon separated from the International.

With revolution in the West failing to come to pass, the function of the CPs in the countries that remained capitalist changed. In 1923, **Stalin** proclaimed the possibility of 'socialism in one country': in the Soviet Union. The CPs of the West now no longer had the main task of implementing the revolution in their respective countries (which seemed impossible in the foreseeable future); rather, in the incipient conflict between systems, they were to protect the results of the Russian Revolution. This reflected a mass experience: the defeat of the insurgent movements in the immediate post-war period on the one hand and the consolidation of the socialist order in the USSR on the other hand suggested a change in strategy not only for the vanguard of the Communist movement in Moscow but also for its adherents in the countries that remained capitalist.

From the late 1920s on, this determination of tasks was expressed in a strict subordination to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). This is the core of the 'Bolshevisation' of the Communist movement. Against **Stalin**, Leo **Trotsky** insisted on the necessity of continuing the world revolutionary process as the only possibility of saving the Russian Revolution. Expelled from the CPSU in 1927 and exiled in 1930, he attempted in the late 1930s to oppose the Stalinist-led Communist International with a 'Fourth International'. But it remained small. In 1940, Trotsky was murdered, clearly on **Stalin**'s orders.

Within the Communist International, its national "sections" acted in a relatively uniform way. During the global economic crisis of 1929–1933, they saw the chance and necessity of breaking through the capitalist system head-on. This was also not just a decision made by the leadership: in the misery of the global economic crisis, there no longer appeared to be an alternative within capitalism for broad masses of workers. Not only in the slogans of the leaderships did the heads of social democracy figure as 'social fascists'; this invective also reflected a deep-seated resentment in particular on the part of long-term unemployed activists of the CPs. The ultra-left turn was therefore willingly executed by the rank and file. With the transfer of power to **Hitler**, this orientation proved to be illusory.

The victory of fascism – initially in Italy in 1922, in Germany in 1933, in Austria (Austro-fascism) in 1934, and in Spain in 1939 – at the same time represented a heavy defeat for the LM. It was a massive reaction by bourgeois society not so much to the threat of a socialist revolution as to the narrowing of the bourgeoisie's room for manoeuvre, especially where its socioeconomic situation was already weak: whether due to a previous defeat in war (Germany, Austria) or due to a disadvantaged position in the world economy from the outset, often combined with the frictions of catch-up industrialisation (Italy, Spain). For this reason, the destructive impact of fascism was not just directed against the CPs but also against social democracy and the trade unions.

At the 7th World Congress of the Comintern (1935), the CPs switched to a policy of forming an anti-fascist popular front, even with bourgeois forces. At the same time, 'Stalinisation' was now also being imposed by bloody means: the CPSU was 'purged' of former opponents of **Stalin**, and German functionaries who had fled to the Soviet Union from **Hitler** were murdered, as were functionaries of other Communist parties who worked in the Soviet Union. In the Spanish Civil War, emissaries of the Soviet secret police took action against anarchists and Trotskyists.

In 1943, the Comintern was dissolved. After the victory of the USSR in the battle of Stalingrad, the resistance movements in the German-occupied countries experienced a great upswing. Many previously small CPs in these countries became mass organisations, such as in France and Italy.

In the European countries occupied by the Soviet Union, the CPs took over the governments. Only in Yugoslavia and Albania was this preceded by a successful independent armed struggle against German occupation, and in 1948 in Czechoslovakia by a revolution supported by large masses of people. Between 1948 and 1952, the CPs of Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia were subjected to a further bloody 'purge'. This had an impact even on

the SED (the ruling party, resulting from a merger in 1946 of the KPD and SPD, first of the Soviet occupation zone in Germany and then of the GDR) and the KPD (in West Germany). The CPs of France and Italy participated in government up to the start of the Cold War and remained mass organisations in opposition during the next few decades. In the early 1960s, the PCI under the leadership of Palmiro **Togliatti** cautiously detached itself from the CPSU's claim to leadership and attempted in the mid-1970s to connect its socialist perspective with the recognition of the human rights demands of the bourgeois revolutions, which included a critique of the ruling practice of the governing CPs. This concept of 'Eurocommunism' was developed at the same time by the Spanish and Japanese CPs and adopted for a while by the PCF.

2.5 With the split in the LM from 1917 on, social democracy was also transformed. Its radical socialist wing was weakened. Distancing themselves from 'Bolshevism', the social democratic parties emphasised adherence to parliamentary procedure and the guarantee of individual and collective liberties as essentials that should not be abandoned for the purpose of abolishing private ownership of the means of production. The struggle for the aim of socialism was tied to adhering to them. Its realisation was no longer understood as a one-time act, a historical point of no return, but rather as a combination of reforms in which the sphere of equality – politics – could impose its conditions on the sphere of inequality – the capitalist economy – to an increasing (but, depending on the social balance of power, reversible) extent: through co-determination by workers' representatives, the implementation of egalitarian labour law, and also legislation on labour relations. The significance of Marxism for the theoretical foundation of such a strategy fluctuated: in Austro-Marxism – the theory and practice of Austrian social democracy in the first republic – the attempt was made to combine a consistent strategy of reform (with particular success in the municipal politics of Vienna) with a still revolutionary aspiration. The social democratic parties whose self-conception Marxism was still a part of (the SPD in Germany, for example) officially turned away from it only in the 1950s.

The split in the political LM was also manifested in various international organisations. In 1914, the Second International had practically collapsed. It was rebuilt after the First World War, but alongside it and the Communist International, there initially existed a special form shaped by Austro-Marxism: the 'Second-and-a-half International', which, after a failed attempt to mediate between the social democratic and Communist currents, joined the former. From this emerged the 'Labour and Socialist International' (LSI), which per-

ished with the temporary victory of fascism in continental Europe. The Socialist International re-founded in 1951 defined its identity by its opposition to Communism.

Alongside the parties, the trade unions are the second classical form of representation of the interests of wage earners. In contrast to cooperative enterprises, they have been able to maintain their practical significance up to the present day. Before 1914, the strongest associations were in Germany and Great Britain. Whereas the Labour Party ultimately emerged from the British trade unions as their political representation, the German trade unions attempted to an increasing extent to become independent of social democracy after the turn of the century. In Germany, Austria, Great Britain, and Scandinavia after the First World War (and up to the present), the trade unions were firmly integrated in the regulation of class relations (with about a decade-and-a-half of declining relevance in Great Britain), whereas in the USA and Japan they were never able to attain comparable importance (with the temporary exception of the New Deal under President Franklin D. **Roosevelt**).

2.6 The October Revolution of 1917 deviated from classical Marxist conceptions of revolution in that it occurred in a country where the working class constituted a minority of the population. This problem was repeated in the revolutions, understood as anti-imperialist, of the colonies and semi-colonies, e.g. in China, Indochina, and Cuba: under the leadership of Communist parties, they set in motion processes of industrialisation in which a mass proletariat first emerged. A connection with the type of LM that had a long tradition in Europe only existed in an external and formal, highly politically mediated sense.

3. With the spread of Eurocommunism in the 1970s and **Gorbachev**'s abandonment of the conflict between systems in the 1980s, the prospect of restoring the unity of the LM temporarily opened up. But at the same time, it was also already accompanied by discussions about the 'end of the LM'. These were caused, among other things, by the following contemporary developments: 1. the historical-philosophical attribution of the role of revolutionary subject to the proletariat by the Communist movement has been falsified. To the extent that the LM was understood exclusively as revolutionary, the elimination of a wing that had hitherto been especially active, though always in the minority, is easily confused with the end of the entire movement; 2. the decline of traditional manual labour has led to a transformation of the working class, which has not yet found an adequate organisational expression; 3. the distinction between the 'working class in itself' (economic determination) and the 'work-

ing class for itself' (socio-cultural and political determination of a 'subjective factor') already dates to **Marx.** In the first decades of the industrial revolutions, there was initially exclusively a constitution of the 'class in itself'. Later, as well, intermittent regressions are possible.

One is forced to such conclusions if one concentrates on the development of the LM in Europe and the Soviet Union. Expanding the field of observation to the United States will find that the status of a 'working class in itself' was hardly ever surpassed there (and if so, then at most in the 1880s and during the New Deal). The history of the Japanese LM followed a course largely analogous to that in Europe. It is conceivable, however, that at the end of a historical cycle of European, Soviet, and Chinese socialism spanning more than a century, a new LM will emerge in a few countries previously held in a state of underdevelopment which are now industrialising. It cannot be judged from the perspective of experiences to date (as much as this may suggest itself in the case of the Chilean popular front government of 1971–1973 and currently for the South African CP). Rather, the categories of assessment have to be changed to do justice to such diverse phenomena as the Brazilian Workers' Party (PT) in the 1990s and the position of the unions under Argentine Peronism in the 1940s and 1950s.

Georg Fülberth
Translated by Alexander Locascio

Bibliography

W. **Abendroth**, *Aufstieg und Krise der deutschen Sozialdemokratie*, 4th ext. edn., Cologne 1978.

W. **Abendroth**, *A Short History of the European Working Class*, New York 1972.

W. **Abendroth**, *Einführung in die Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung. Vol. 1: Von den Anfängen bis 1933*, Heilbronn 1985.

E. **Bernstein**, *Die Voraussetzungen des Sozialismus und die Aufgaben der Sozialdemokratie* (1899), Bonn-Bad Godesberg 1977.

J. **Braunthal**, *History of the International*, 3 vols., New York 1967.

F. **Deppe**, G. **Fülberth**, J. **Harrer** (eds.), *Geschichte der deutschen Gewerkschaftsbewegung*, Cologne 1989.

J. **Droz** (ed.), *Geschichte des Sozialismus*, 15 vols., Frankfurt/M-Berlin/W-Vienna 1974–1979.

O. **Flechtheim**, *Die KPD in der Weimarer Republik*, Frankfurt/M 1986.

H. **Grebing**, *Geschichte der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung*, Munich 1966.

R. **Hilferding**, *Finance Capital: Study in the Latest Phase of Capitalist Development* (1910), New York 1981.

W. **Hofmann**, *Ideengeschichte der sozialen Bewegung des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts*, 6th, ext. edn., Berlin/W-New York 1979.

A. **Klönne**, *Die deutsche Arbeiterbewegung: Geschichte, Ziele, Wirkungen*, Hamburg 1989.

A. **Klönne**, H. **Reese**, *Die deutsche Gewerkschaftsbewegung: Von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, Hamburg 1984.

J. **Kocka**, *Weder Stand noch Klasse: Unterschichten um 1800*, Berlin/W 1990.

J. **Kocka**, *Arbeitsverhältnisse und Arbeiterexistenzen: Grundlagen der Klassenbildung im 19. Jahrhundert*, Göttingen 1983.

J. **Kuczynski**, *Die Geschichte der Lage der Arbeiter unter dem Kapitalismus*, Berlin/GDR 1963 et sqq.

S. **Miller**, H. **Potthoff**, *Kleine Geschichte der SPD*, Berlin/W 1991.

A. **Rosenberg**, *A History of Bolshevism: From Marx to the First Five-Year Plan*, Oxford 1934.

E.P. **Thompson**, *The Making of the English Working Class*, New York 1963.

H.A. **Winkler**, *Von der Revolution zur Stabilisierung: Arbeiter und Arbeiterbewegung in der Weimarer Republik 1918 bis 1924*, Berlin/W-Bonn 1984.

H.A. **Winkler**, *Der Schein der Normalität: Arbeiter und Arbeiterbewegung in der Weimarer Republik 1924 bis 1930*, Berlin/W-Bonn 1985.

H.A. **Winkler**, *Der Weg in die Katastrophe: Arbeiter und Arbeiterbewegung in der Weimarer Republik 1930 bis 1933*, Berlin/W-Bonn 1987.

H. **Zwahr**, *Zur Konstituierung des Proletariats als Klasse: Strukturuntersuchung über das Leipziger Proletariat während der industriellen Revolution*, Berlin/GDR 1978.

→ anarchism, anti-colonialism, Austro-Marxism, Bonapartism, centralism, centrism, Chartism, class consciousness, class in itself/for itself, class struggle, co-determination/workers' participation, collective action, Comintern, communism, Communist Manifesto, cooperative, counterpower, democratic centralism, economism, Eurocommunism, forms of (trade) union struggle, Fourierism, illegality, imperialism, industrialisation, labour aristocracy, labour power, labour time, left-wing radicalism, lumpenproletariat, Luxemburgism, Marxism, mass movement, nation state, operaismo, opportunism, Owenism, pacifism, parliamentarism, parties, party press, petty bourgeois, popular front, professional revolutionary, proletarian workers' education, reformism, regulation school, revisionism, revolutionary syndicalism, Saint-Simonism, Second International, skilled worker, social democracy, social democratic party programmes, social movements, social policy, Stalinism, strike, trade unions, Trot-

skyism, ultraleft, united front, unity of action, vanguard, wage-labour, war, workers' control, working class, working class cultural movement, working class culture, Zimmerwaldists

→ Aktionseinheit, Anarchismus, Antikolonialismus, Arbeiteraristokratie, Arbeiterklasse, Arbeiterkontrolle, Arbeiterkultur, Arbeiterkulturbewegung, Arbeitskraft, Arbeitszeit, Austromarxismus, Avantgarde, Berufsrevolutionär, Bonapartismus, Chartismus, demokratischer Zentralismus, Einheitsfront, Eurokommunismus, Facharbeiter, Fourierismus, Gegenmacht, Genossenschaftsbewegung, Gewerkschaften, gewerkschaftliche Kampfformen, Illegalität, Imperialismus, Industrialisierung, Klasse an sich/für sich, Klassenbewusstsein, Klassenkämpfe, Kleinbürger, Krieg, kollektives Handeln, Komintern, Kommunismus, Kommunistisches Manifest, Linksradikalismus, Lohnarbeit, Lumpenproletariat, Luxemburgismus, Marxismus, Massenbewegung, Mitbestimmung, Nationalstaat, Ökonomismus, Operaismus, Opportunismus, Owenismus, Parlamentarismus, Parteien, Parteipresse, Pazifismus, proletarische Arbeiterbildung, Reformismus, Regulationstheorie, Revisionismus, revolutionärer Syndikalismus, Saint-Simonismus, Sozialdemokratie, sozialdemokratische Programme, soziale Bewegungen, Sozialpolitik, Stalinismus, Streik, Trotzkismus, Ultralinke, Volksfront, Zentralismus, Zentrismus, Zimmerwalder, Zweite Internationale

CHAPTER 28

Land Reform

A: iṣlāḥ zirāʿī. – F: réforme agraire. – G: Bodenreform. – R: zemel'naja reforma. – S: reforma agraria. – C: tǔdì gǎigé 土地改革

LR aims at fundamentally new relations in the ownership and use of land in cities and rural areas. In all historical epochs, the social treatment of land has been a major political, social, and technical-production challenge and line of conflict. This is a function of the significance of land and soil (as a regulator in the natural, in particular material balance, and as a means of production, raw material, and building ground) and of the persistent threats they face from pollution, overexploitation, and speculation. Historical epochs can be characterised in terms of the specifics of their land ownership and use regulations, or the disputes over them.

Marx and **Engels** developed their understanding of the land question primarily from the critique of physiocratic (e.g., **Turgot** and **Quesnay**; see MECW 30/352–76; 34/288–314 [MEW 26.1/12–39, 354–62]) and bourgeois positions (e.g., **Petty**, **Smith**, **Ricardo**, or **Rodbertus**; cf. MECW 34/170–77 [MEW 26.1/330–40]; 31/250–386, 521–78 [26.2/7–160, 304–74]); in the historical analysis of landed property within the development of capital relations (MECW 35/704–61 [MEW 23/741–803]); in the elaboration of the theory of ground rent as part of the theory of surplus value (MECW 37/608–800 [MEW 25/627–821]); and in concrete political studies (such as **Engels**'s *Condition*). **Marx** summarised this understanding as follows: 'The property in the soil is the original source of all wealth, and has become the great problem upon the solution of which depends the future of the working class' (MECW 23/131 [MEW 18/59]). And yet the term LR is found neither in the classical texts nor in the subject and title index of any text edition published to date. In terms of content, however, Marx and **Engels** always considered the radical upheaval of the private rights of land use and disposal to be a necessary part of fundamental socialist changes within society. Thus, they essentially followed in the tradition of radical land reformers such as Thomas **More** or Gracchus **Babeuf**. 'From the standpoint of a higher economic form of society, private ownership of the globe by single individuals will appear quite as absurd as private ownership of one man by another. Even a whole society, a nation, or even all simultaneously existing societies taken together, are not the owners of the globe. They are only its

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_029
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

possessors, its usufructuaries, and, like *boni patres familias*, they must hand it down to succeeding generations in an improved condition' (*C III*, MECW 37/763 [MEW 25/784]).

As early as 1847, **Engels** developed concrete ideas on land reform in *The Principles of Communism*, where he calls for '[g]radual expropriation of landed proprietors [...], partly through competition [...] and partly [...] through expropriation', 'cultivation of all uncultivated land and improvement of land already cultivated', 'erection of large palaces on national estates as common dwellings for communities of citizens engaged in industry as well as agriculture, and combining the advantages of both urban and rural life', and 'demolition of all badly built and unsanitary buildings' (MECW 6/350 et sq. [MEW 4/373 et sq.]). These positions are reiterated in the *Manifesto* (505 et sq. [481 et sq.]) and reaffirmed – albeit in a modified form – in *Demands of the Communist Party in Germany*. According to this last statement, it was above all important to abolish the burdens of feudal levies and to nationalise feudal estates. Moreover, mortgages and rents were to be paid directly to the state and no longer to landowners (MECW 7/3 [MEW 5/3 et sq.]).

At first, **Marx** and **Engels** did not view a general nationalisation of land as absolutely necessary. It was not until two decades later that **Marx** took up this question again and presented LR as a socially and historically justified necessity and a precondition for a social and democratic future: '[T]he social movement will lead to this decision that the land can but be owned by the nation itself [...] The nationalisation of land will work a complete change in the relations between labour and capital, and finally, do away with the capitalist form of production [...] [There will emerge] a society composed of associations of free and equal producers' (MECW 23/135 et sq. [MEW 18/62]).

In this context, **Marx** explicitly opposed any nationalisation of land not accompanied by nationalisation of the other means of production. He also opposed merely transferring land to a special social class such as peasants or agricultural workers. **Engels** took a new stand as well in the debate on LR, which became more heated at the close of the 19th cent. For rural areas, he proposed the expropriation of large landholdings and the transfer of small farms and property to cooperatives, 'not forcibly but by dint of example' (MECW 27/496 [MEW 22/499]). He viewed his proposals as a contribution to the elimination of disparities between town and country. In the cities, the main task was to nationalise the land, expropriate the owners of rented apartments, and use the state to fairly allocate those apartments that were available in sufficient numbers. However, the housing question could not be solved successfully without social upheaval (MECW 23/330 [MEW 18/226 et sq.]).

By way of contrast, land reformers in the narrower sense, such as **Damaschke** circa 1900, mostly emphasised the stand-alone character of their primarily fiscal and legal demands, which, they held, could be achieved independently of a fundamental social transformation. In the political struggle for LR, the dominant views in Germany have thus focused on a redistribution of land ownership in favour of small property holders, or on the elimination of special profits from land or residential property by means of tax and income reform. A high point in these efforts was represented by the passages on LR in the Weimar Constitution and later in the constitutions of the federal states after the Second World War, as well as by the efforts undertaken by the West German FRG during the 1970s to establish a social land law. But success remained elusive. In the GDR, on the other hand, following radical redistribution via LR and the formation of state enterprises on about 8 % of the land, both urban and rural land continued to be largely owned privately, although it was subject to strict use regulations or cooperative management. In the 1990 Treaty on German Unification, the expropriations that had taken place up to 1949 as part of LR were codified, although they were increasingly called into question following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

From the beginning, the international discussion on LR has shifted between socialist and system-immanent reform positions (**Diehl** 1911). The decision taken at the Brussels Congress of the First International in 1868 to transform land into common social property (cf. **Liebknecht** 1870) was already being hotly disputed at the Basel Congress in 1870, especially within the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD). In 1917, the Bolsheviks declared all land in the Soviet Union to be common property. The LR efforts in the rest of Europe achieved no significant successes, mostly due to the defeat of the November Revolution in Germany.

The expansion of the socialist state system through the Chinese Revolution and the victory of the Soviet Union in the Second World War had drastic, albeit varied, consequences for property relations and forms of land use. In China, for example, urban land became public property, whereas rural land became collective property. In Yugoslavia, populated areas were socialised, while private land ownership of up to ten hectares remained possible. In Poland, estates of up to 100 hectares, i.e., most of the estate land, could be used privately. The restructuring of land ownership and land use relations also plays a central role in the political reform efforts associated with the anti-colonial struggles of the less industrialised countries. Such revision is always an essential part of efforts to achieve agrarian reform. In Cuba, for example, estates and settlement areas larger than 67 hectares were gradually nationalised. In Nicaragua, comprehensive LR in favour of cooperative farms was attempted. The systemic reform

attempts undertaken by the socialist states during the 1980s aimed at partial re-privatisation of land ownership. After these attempts failed, the various results of the LR were cancelled in favour of private property, a development that is widely seen as a central element in the collapse of state-monopolistic socialism.

At the same time, conflicts over land are coming to a head once again, given the classic problems of land and housing speculation and the asocial distribution of property, as well as the growing issue of environmental pollution.

Helmut Arnold
Translated by Max Henninger

Bibliography

T. **Bergmann**, *Agrarpolitik und Agrarwirtschaft sozialistischer Länder*, Stuttgart 1973.
H.H. **Bohte**, *Landeskultur in Deutschland*, Hamburg-Berlin/W 1976.
P. **Conradi**, *Für ein soziales Bodenrecht*, Frankfurt/M 1972.
A. **Damaschke**, *Die Bodenreform*, Berlin 1907.
K. **Diehl**, 'Der ältere Agrarsozialismus und die neuere Bodenreformbewegung in Amerika, England und Deutschland', *Grünberg-Archiv*, vol. 1, 1911, 225–84.
W. **Hofmann**, *Ideengeschichte der sozialen Bewegung*, Berlin/W-New York 1974.
H. **Immler**, *Natur in der ökonomischen Theorie*, Opladen 1985.
J. **Jansen**, 'Zweihundert Jahre Bodenreformbewegung', *Blätter*, no. 7, 1973, 727–42.
W. **Liebknecht**, 'Die Grund- und Bodenfrage' (1870), *Kleine politische Schriften*, Leipzig 1976.
D. **Schneider**, *Selbsthilfe, Staatshilfe, Selbstverwaltung*, Frankfurt/M 1973.

→ agrarian reform/land reform, collectivisation, earth, expropriation, ground-rent, housing question, ownership/property, peasants, reformism, ruinous exploitation, socialisation, urban/rural (dichotomy)

→ Agrarreform, Bauern, Besitz/Eigentum, Enteignung, Erde, Grundrente, Kollektivierung, Raubbau, Reformismus, Stadt/Land, Vergesellschaftung, Wohnungsfrage

CHAPTER 29

Materialise / Materialisation

A: ğassada / tağassud. – F: matérialiser / matérialisation. – G: materialisieren / Materiatur. – R: materializirovat' / materializacija. – S: materializar / materialización, concreción material. – C: wùzhìhuà / huàshēn 物质化 / 化身

In the Postface to the 2nd edn. of *C 1*, **Marx** casually mentions that the *Revue Positiviste* had reproached him for 'treating economics metaphysically' (*C 1*, 99 [MEW 23/35]). He omits to mention that it is precisely the other way around, seeing as his own analysis reveals that the commodity form – and, with it, the entire succession of value-forms – is 'abounding in metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties' (163 [85]). In this sense, his critique of political economy could be read as a critique of the real-parametaphysics and real-paratheology of capital. His deliberations on the materialisation of the previously immaterial and the resulting matter carry echoes of the gospel of **John**: '[t]he Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory' (1:14). **Marx**'s paraphrased use of this language serves 'to perform a task never even attempted by bourgeois economics. That is, we have to show the origin of this money-form' (*C 1*, 139 [MEW 23/62]) and, proceeding from there, to initiate the reconstruction of the genesis of the capital form and its formal differentiation down to the most remote derivate forms. Classical bourgeois economics revealed – 'however incompletely' – labour to be 'the content concealed within these forms' (173 et sq. [94 et sq.]). 'But it has never once asked the question why this content has assumed that particular form, that is to say, why labour is expressed in value, and why the measurement of labour by its duration is expressed in the magnitude of the value of the product. These formulas, which bear the unmistakable stamp of belonging to a social formation in which the process of production has mastery over man, instead of the opposite, appear to the political economists' bourgeois consciousness to be as much a self-evident and nature-imposed necessity as productive labour itself' (174 et sq. [95 et sq.]).

This is the conceptual framework within which **Marx** proceeds, according to his 'meta-critique of religion' (**Haug** 2016), to the critique of the factual paratheology of capital. Here, at an analytical level, which **Zhang** Yibing has termed that of 'historical-phenomenological critique' (1999/2014, e.g. 482), **Marx** uses the terms materialise and materialisation. They serve what **Zhang** refers to as the historical-phenomenological articulation of the answer to the question of

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_030
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

how social labour is turned into the dis-placed [*ver-rückt*] form of the property of a thing, as a result of which the products of labour are transformed into 'sensuous things which are at the same time suprasensible or social' (*C I*, 165 [MEW 23/86]). **Marx** encounters both terms in **Hegel** – yet while he uses them to formulate his critique of capitalist real-metaphysics, for **Hegel** they function as metaphysical concepts.

1. In *The Science of Logic*, **Hegel** considers matter to be the 'formless identity' of essence, a 'simple identity, void of distinction', 'the other of form' (*SciLogic*, 392). And yet, matter always has a relation to form. It is not the latter's opposite, but its 'proper *base* or substrate' (ibid.). Form implies the existence of matter. Matter 'contains form locked up inside it' (393). Form, in turn, 'must *materialize* itself; it must give itself [...] subsistence in matter' (ibid.).

In the 2nd part of his *Encyclopaedia*, titled the *Philosophy of Nature*, **Hegel** defines as 'real matter' (*Enc II*, § 271, 83) only that which is 'imbued with form' (§ 307, 156). Matter is determined to resolve itself into form, which, in turn, is 'in this way materialized' (§ 271, 83). Hence, absolute mechanics transitions to physics, a science of 'qualified matter' (ibid.), meaning 'materialized form-determinations' (§ 272, *Zusatz*, 85). Such a 'materialisation [*Materiatur*], melting under heat', is therefore 'receptive to form' (§ 307, 158, transl. amended). The body is 'tensed' (§ 324, *Zusatz*, 224) towards differentiation and thus transformation; the latter occurs once 'the specific materiality [*Materiatur*] of the tensed body has [...] entered into the process' (ibid.). 'The chemical process is thus, through the dissolution of shape, the transition into the higher sphere of the organism where the infinite form makes itself, as infinite form, real' (§ 336, *Zusatz*, 271). In reference to **Heraclitus**, who 'declared the soul to be Fire' (272), **Hegel** likens the organic to the 'free Fire (α) as purged of matter, and (β) as materialized in existence (*Dasein*)' (ibid.). His discourse moves within the imagery of a mode of thought whose path proceeds from the conceptual construction of a universal totality to the moments in which 'Nature has risen to the existence (*Dasein*) of the Notion' (ibid.).

2. **Marx** initially uses "materialise" in the sense that thoughts are put into practice. In the context of the Belgian Revolution, he also uses 'materialise' as a complementary form of 'spiritualise' [*vergeistigen*]: 'The government can materialise a spiritual revolution; a material revolution must first spiritualise the government' (1842, MECW 1/143 [MEW 1/39]).

In his CPE, **Marx** then assigns the conceptual pair materialise/materialisation the function of "phenomenologically" expressing the transition from living labour to the labour product taking on the property of value, and thus the trans-

formation of a social relation into a relation of things. In Notebook I of his *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy* (the *Grundrisse*), he states: '1/x ounce of gold is in fact nothing but materialised, objectified, x hours of labour time' (MECW 28/72 [MEW 42/70]). Later, in Notebook VI, Marx defines this mode of being and its function more precisely by introducing the term materialisation (*Materiatur*): it denotes the form in which the results of the commodity-producing labour process can be exchanged. As value, it 'is now expressed in terms of another material representing the same labour time' (29/20 [42/531]). Still later, in Notebook VII, Marx fleshes out the functional principle based on the example of the measure of value: money, at this point still in the form of gold, 1) 'is measure only because it materialises labour time in a definite substance, hence is itself value'; 2) 'because this definite material is regarded as the generally objective material of value, as the material of labour time as such in distinction from its merely particular incarnations. Hence, because it is an equivalent'; and 3) 'since in its function as measure, money is a merely notional point of comparison', it 'only needs to exist ideally' in this function, given that 'the commodities are translated into their general mode of existence as value only notionally' (172 [682]), indicating the condition of the possibility of a transition to credit and paper money (as well as "digital" money in the late 20th cent.).

In *Capital*, **Marx** is no longer concerned with the concept of the "general objectivity" (*Allgemeingegenständlichkeit*) of the value materialisation of performed labour. Gold, as a 'money commodity' (*C I*, 163 [MEW 23/84]), remains the specific physical substance which nevertheless represents an intangible resource [*nicht-stoffliche Substanz*] – namely hours worked, or "dead" labour – and thus constitutes value materialisation [*Wert-Materiatur*]. Labour itself (in an abstract sense) is not immaterial, but rather a material process, and its materiality extends itself over time. Its purpose (given its value-creating capacity) is to be profitably realised in the market. So, in reality nothing immaterial is materialised, but instead a *transition* occurs – which is unintentionally set in motion by the active participants *as such* – of social constitutive power into a different form of power. In contrast to use-value, in which concrete useful labour is objectified, the materialisation [*Materiatur*] of labour as such, in its *abstract* quantity, does not manifest itself as a sensuous object. Gold is merely the material in which it is materialised in the mode of representation. That which is represented is a relation. In doing so, the active participants have always 'already acted before thinking' (180 [101]).

Through the value relation of commodities, the money commodity represents – and money itself constitutes – a social relation of production. The character of this relation, based on private property and an according division of

labour, shapes the social form of the commodity and thus of its independent value-form [*Wertgestalt*], namely money. As a value, labour attains relational materiality, the specific corporeality of which constitutes, in the case of gold money, 'the riddle of the commodity fetish, now become visible and dazzling to our eyes' (187 [108]). Gold as money appears to be of stable value, at least as long as money is expressed exclusively as a certain gold equivalent and therefore cannot lose its monetary value in nominal terms. And yet, it can certainly lose its value in real terms if less labour time is materialised in a certain amount of gold, or more labour time in an equal measure of commodities. The historical phase-out of gold and silver money changes nothing about these relations, though it does eliminate one attribute, i.e. that of having independent value. In other words: here, as a result of materialisation, the social determination of form manifests itself in the "material" sense, in that a certain matter is assigned a socially-determined form. The social determination of form may not be physical, but it is by all means material.

Here, **Marx** uses "materialise" and "objectify" synonymously: 'A use-value, or useful article, therefore, has value only because abstract human labour is objectified [*vergegenständlicht*] or materialized in it' (129 [53]). That is to say, labour, seen as being value-creating, is not understood as a specific, concrete act of labour, but as an abstraction thereof, as 'human labour-power expended without regard to the form of its expenditure' (128 [52]). Value, however, which is unrecognisable from the physical shape or substance of an individual commodity, emerges only in relation to the corporeality of another commodity, namely as the product of the corresponding concrete labour expended. 'Commodity A, then, in entering into a relation with commodity B as an object of value [*Wertkörper*], as a materialization [*Materiatur*] of human labour, makes the use-value B into the material through which its own value is expressed' (144 [67]). According to Marx's deliberations in the 1st edn. of *C 1*, the development of the value-form eventually has the effect that the '*specific* labour materialized' in a specific commodity, which has become a universal equivalent, 'now thereby counts as *universal form of realization* of human labour, as *universal labour*' (as cit. in **Dragstedt** 1976, 27 [MEGA II.5/37]). In the 2nd edn., the latter term is abandoned in this context, owing to the fact that its meaning of 'directly social labour' refers to a general common good provided specifically and directly – i.e. without market mediation, while it appears as 'abstract universal labour' (*C 1*, 209 [MEW 23/128]) only with regard to value, that is to say, as 'socially equalized labor [that takes] the specific form of abstract labor characteristic of the commodity economy' (**Rubin** 1923/1972, 168). Hence, **Marx**'s use of the term must be considered on two distinct levels: 1) with regard to value, all commodities represent materialised labour; 2) money, which is material-

ised concrete and specific labour, constitutes the materialisation [*Materiatur*] of abstract labour.

In ch. 7 of *C 1* on the 'Labour Process and the Valorization Process' (283 et sqq. [MEW 23/192 et sqq. (ch. 5)]), then, **Marx** distinguishes between materialisation [*Materialisieren*] and objectification [*Vergegenständlichen*]. While the former pertains to the category of 'labour sans phrase' (MECW 28/41 [MEW 42/39]) and thus value creation, the category of objectification refers to the process of concrete labour which produces use-value, for which the following applies: 'The process is extinguished in the product. The product of the process is a use-value, a piece of natural material adapted to human needs by means of a change in its form. Labour has become bound up in its object: labour has been objectified, the object has been worked on. What on the side of the worker appeared in the form of unrest [*Unruhe*] now appears, on the side of the product, in the form of being [*Sein*], as a fixed, immobile characteristic. The worker has spun, and the product is spun yarn' (*C 1*, 287; transl. corrected [MEW 23/195]). Yet the side of the ruling class, which drives the capitalist for-the-sake-of-which effort, is the abstract side of the valorisation of value. Ultimately, according to Marx, '[a]ll surplus-value, whatever particular form (profit, interest or rent) it may subsequently crystallize into, is in substance the materialization [*Materiatur*] of unpaid labour-time' (672 [556]).

Wolfgang Fritz Haug
Translated by Jan-Peter Herrmann

Bibliography

A. **Dragstedt**, *Value: Studies by Karl Marx*, London 1976, 7–40.

W.F. **Haug**, 'Karl Marx' Metakritik der Religion', *Argument* 320, vol. 58, 2016, no. 6, 861–79.

I.I. **Rubin**, *Essays on Marx's Theory of Value* (1923), transl. M. Samardžija and F. Perlman from the 3rd Russ. edn., Detroit 1972.

Zhang Yibing, *Back to Marx: Changes of Philosophical Discourse in the Context of Economics* (1999), ed. O. Corff, transl. T. Mitchell from the 2nd exp. Chin. edn. (2009), Göttingen 2014.

→ abstract/concrete, abstract labour, concept, contemplative materialism, critique of Hegel, critique of religion, determination/determinism, Feuerbachian materialism, Feuerbach Theses, form, form and substance, form content, form

of value, historical materialism, idealism/materialism, immaterial, labour, material, materialism (practical-dialectical), materiality (historical), matter, metaphor, metaphysics, objectification, possibility, reification, relation, spirit/mind, substance, substantially/consisting of substance, universal labour, value, value substance/measure, young Marx

→ abstrakt/konkret, abstrakte Arbeit, allgemeine Arbeit, anschauender Materialismus, Arbeit, Begriff, Bestimmung / Determination, Feuerbachscher Materialismus, Feuerbach-Thesen, Form, Formgehalt / Forminhalt, Form und Substanz, Geist, Hegel-Kritik, historischer Materialismus, Idealismus / Materialismus, immateriell, junger Marx, Materialismus (praktisch-dialektischer), Materialität (historische), Materie, materiell, Metapher, Metaphysik, Möglichkeit, Religionskritik, stofflich, Substanz, Verdinglichung, Vergegenständlichung, Verhältnis, Wert, Wertform, Wertsubstanz/-maß

CHAPTER 30

Materialism, Practical-Dialectical

A: al-māddīya al-ǧadalīya al-ʿamalīya. – F: matérialisme pratique-dialectique. – G: praktisch-dialektischer Materialismus. – R: praktičeskij-dialektičeskij materializm. – S: materialismo práctico-dialéctico. – C: shíjiàn biànzhèng wéiwù zhǔyì 实践辩证唯物主义

The term PDM, which comprises three basic concepts, denotes the novelty of **Marx**ian materialism. The first one to dissect this innovation as a materialist conception of history was Antonio **Labriola** in his *Saggi* – a 'new genre, situated between the marginalia on **Marx** and **Engels**'s text and the independent development of the theory' (**Burgio** 2012). A commonplace view is that **Labriola** acted only 'as a philosopher – not an agent – of socialism' (**v. Beyme** 2013, 296). Disproving this notion, Roberto **Carocci** (2016) has traced his dauntless appearances and programmatic interventions during the early days of the Italian socialist workers' movement which were frequently accompanied by tumultuous scenes. The period was marked by anarchist activism, and he, too, came into conflict with the state authorities. **Labriola**'s exposition initially leads onto the terrain of the 'new' materialism (*ThF* 10, MECW 5/5, [MEW 3/7]) that **Marx** had in mind prior to his work on the *German Ideology*.

In *GI* (the manuscript of which, however, **Engels** never made available to **Labriola**, who was intuitively aware of its main arguments nonetheless though), **Marx** and **Engels** situate this materialism within the 'science of history' (MECW 5/28, see Author's Notes) in the broader sense, encompassing the 'history of nature and the history of men' both in their specificity and asymmetrical interdependence; in their view, it ultimately constitutes the 'single science' (ibid., see Notes [MEW 3/18]) which subsumes all other historical subject areas. Fully in line with the *Theses on Feuerbach* – **Marx**'s crucial self-defining text – which **Engels** did not see until 40 years later when sifting through **Marx**'s estate – the two authors define their new materialism more specifically – in contrast to 'contemplative materialism' (see *ThF* 9, MECW 5/5 [MEW 3/7]) – as 'practical' materialism (38 [42]). They deem the entire range of activities with the aim 'of practically coming to grips with and changing the things found in existence' and, ultimately, 'of revolutionising the existing world' (38 et sq. [42]), the laboratory of this materialism.

The combination of praxis analysis and a theory of history represents a decisive step towards the theoretical footing of the 'new' materialism. Its reach

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_031
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

becomes clear when compared to the self-contradiction in which Soviet-style ML became entangled as a result of one of its philosophical axioms: given that **Lenin**, in *ME*, defines matter, in the epistemological sense, as that which lies 'outside [consciousness]' and exists 'independently [thereof]' (CW 14/55), the concept of matter can supposedly 'only be determined through its relationship to the concept of "consciousness"' (**Buhr**/**Kosing** 1974, 182). The mistake here is less this definition so much as the premise upon which it is issued. It is one of these cases in which critique continues to adhere to the basic premise of that which is critiqued and thus remains treacherously determined by it, so that 'the new assertions [...] fail to correspond to the experience [...] without reference to the old ones' (**Brecht**, GA 21, 427; GW 20, 177). The new terms are 'then often [spoiled] for their actual use' (ibid.). To proceed from consciousness, as Archimedean point, is to remain 'on the terrain of [...] idealism and its structure', only to 'promote the decision against idealism' there, which, however, '[enjoys] all home-field advantages' on its home turf (**Haug** 1978, 193). The 'actual use' in the Marxian sense that Bertolt **Brecht** is referring to requires a different approach. The latter is provided by *praxis*, once the concept is salvaged from the idealistic transpositions into the dualistically removed "spiritual" and from the breathlessness of pragmatism and brought down to the terrain of a historical-materialist philosophy of the contradictory praxis of life.

Proceeding along this path, while working on the *Critique of Political Economy*, **Marx** gradually transforms **Hegel**ian dialectics, within the *modus operandi* of his research and exposition, into a new type of materialism. While the position proceeding from consciousness leads to metaphysical materialism, the **Marx**ian approach, which traces material praxis in its contradictions and figures of movement, can be understood, in the words of **Labriola**, as 'a conception more general, genetic, evolutionary or dialectic' (*HM-P*, 64), or, in short, as 'practical (dialectical) materialism' (**Haug** 1973, 561) – which, as shall be demonstrated in the following, is the precondition for *historical materialism*.

1. The **Marx**ian break with 'all previous materialism', because it conceives 'things [*Gegenstand*], reality, sensuousness [...] only in the form of the object, or of contemplation, but not as sensuous human activity, practice, not subjectively' (*ThF* 1, MECW 5/3 [MEW 3/5]), implies a dynamic world view. To begin with, the accusation of conceiving 'things [*Gegenstand*] [...] only in the form of the object' may be a source of confusion. In the Romance languages, as well as in French-influenced English, which do not necessarily differentiate between 'item/thing' (*Gegenstand*) and 'object' (*Objekt*), this phrase must sound paradox. The fact that Marx, in the following sentence, credits idealism with the achievement of considering, 'in contradistinction to materialism,

the active side', can be confusing when the critical counterweight attached to this recognition is ignored or underestimated: according to Marx, activity is 'set forth abstractly by idealism', i.e. without 'real, sensuous activity as such', let alone accommodating 'the significance of "revolutionary", of "practical-dialectical", activity' (ibid.). In order to highlight the contradistinction to 'all previous materialism', Marx terms the latter 'contemplative materialism' (*ThF* 9, MECW 5/5 [MEW 3/7]) and attributes its world view to its underlying premise of the private, isolated individual. As he asserts in *ThF* 7, the latter, as an 'abstract individual' (*ThF* 7, ibid.), i.e. as an individual separated from his sociality, belongs to 'a particular form of society' (ibid.), which is identified as 'bourgeois society' (*ThF* 9, ibid.; transl. mod.). If the latter constitutes 'the standpoint of the old materialism', then Marx defines 'human society, or social humanity' as 'the standpoint of the new [materialism]' (*ThF* 10, ibid.). In *ThF* 11, moreover, the 'new' materialism is proclaimed as one for changing the world.

The theoretical implications of the *Theses* are profound. Although so much has been written about them, the mysterious *ThF* 1 has rarely been studied conclusively. It is almost as if **Marx**'s philosophical intuition in this instance goes beyond what he is able to articulate at that stage of development. He radically challenges the grammar of the philosophy of consciousness, which juxtaposes an abstractly independent inner world in opposition to an outside world of phenomena whose reality then becomes a matter of dispute. This architecture is a core element of classic bourgeois ideology, built upon the foundations of 'ontological dualism' (**Lukács**, *Zur Ontologie des gesellschaftlichen Seins* [German edition only], I, 333), which **Plato** conceived at the historical moment of crisis in ancient Athens. Just as an ellipse has two focal points, the spiritual sphere, in the bourgeois notion, has its complementary counterpart on which it feeds outside itself, namely in the form of an unbridled capitalist exploitation of humans and nature.

According to **Marx**'s understanding, 'objective activity' (*ThF* 1, MECW 5/3, [MEW 3/5]) has always defied this discursive confinement to the contemplation–object relation with reality. Given that it occurs "in reality", it appears, from the perspective of subjective idealism, as "outside itself", in the "outside world", where hands, legs, and heads have never differed from instrumental objects [*Dinge*]. By following its own reality conditions, thinking transitions from the epistemology of the philosophy of consciousness to historical-materialist epistemology. This change of terrain, which Marx initiated, merges the inner and the outside worlds – namely in the world of humans who perform social labour in an historically specific way. Not only are they *active* within this world in an 'objective' manner [*gegenständlich*], nor are they only the "*subjects*" of their activity, but they are also, and particularly, *objective for this world*. For

all reality must be grasped *as a causal relationship in the sense of its having-an-effect* [*Wirkendheit*], and each human being must be considered within precisely this causal relationship.

This is **Lenin**'s concern when conceptualising the object of the *CPE* not as an ensemble of things [*Dinge*] but of *relations of social praxis*. Practices, relations, and processes are the object of study in this theoretical science. In reality, therefore, scientists do not remain outside their object when cognitively objectifying its inner workings. Praxis *is* that of each individual, and, at the same time, *it is not*: it appears individual in the immediacy of certain concrete activities, though it turns out to be mediated in all respects via the social mesh of practices and is in an interdependent relationship with the latter. In *ThF* 6, this mesh of active relationships to the world is subsumed into the 'ensemble of the social relations' (MECW 5/4 [MEW 3/6]), constituting the objective condition of possibility – which evolves continually throughout the 'historical process' (ibid.) – for the appropriation and realisation of the 'essence of man' (ibid.). Therefore, "being in the world" means being an indelible part of history. In *GI*, this notion, in a comprehensive sense, is tentatively conceptualised as 'a single science, the science of history' (*GI*, MECW 5/28 [MEW 3/18]).

2. In the course of specifying what practical materialism is and must be capable of in terms of *theory* in order to '[change] the things found in existence' (MECW 5/38 et sq. [MEW 3/42]), **Marx** and **Engels** introduce the basic terms of what was subsequently denominated historical materialism. The basic rule is that the theoretical relationship to the world must keep up with the practical one, must not award itself priority, not even if it critically goes beyond the existing praxis. All concrete reality in which we live, regardless of whether in the sense of society or nature, is historical in a general sense not limited to human beings, and it has become mediated 'so much' by 'activity, this unceasing sensuous labour and creation, this production, [as] the foundation of the whole sensuous world as it now exists that, were it interrupted only for a year, **Feuerbach** would not only find an enormous change in the natural world, but would very soon find that the whole world of men and his own perceptive faculty, nay his own existence, were missing' (MECW 5/40 [MEW 3/44]). 'Production', here, must not be understood, in the narrow sense, solely as the production of goods, let alone commodities, but, quite literally, as the making or creation of something. In a marginal note, **Marx** writes: 'So-called objective historiography consisted precisely in treating the historical relations separately from activity. Reactionary character' (55 [40]).

The task with view to these 'things found in existence', i.e. relations, is thus to devise a concrete conceptual framework. The key elements for this in terms of

social theory are provided about a quarter cent. later by **Marx**'s principal work, the *Critique of Political Economy*, while **Engels** elaborates those concerning the theory of nature.

The question about the specific way in which **Marx** applies the dialectical method in his *CPE* brings us to genetic reconstruction through praxis analysis (**Haug** 1974/2005; 2006a; 2013). In the *ThF*, **Marx** condenses this – based on the example of Ludwig **Feuerbach**'s critique of religion – into the formula that it is not enough to '[resolve] the religious world into its secular basis', but that, instead, it is necessary to explain, based on 'the inner strife and intrinsic contradictoriness of this secular basis [...] that the secular basis lifts off from itself and establishes itself as an independent realm in the clouds' (*ThF* 4, MECW 5/4 [MEW 3/6]). The general fundamental significance of the praxeological approach is explained in *ThF* 8: 'All social life is essentially practical. All mysteries which lead theory to mysticism find their rational solution in human practice and in the comprehension of this practice' (MECW 5/5 [MEW 3/7]).

A quarter of a cent. later (1873), **Marx** captures the objective of his dialectical method in the formula of 'regard[ing] every historically developed form as being in a fluid state' (*C I*, 103 [MEW 23/28]). What exactly this means is expounded at the beginning of the chapter on industry, in which Marx implicitly recurs to *ThF* 4. The context here is the observation that, 'as yet', a 'critical history of technology' does not exist, even though, after all, 'technology reveals the active relation of man to nature, the direct process of the production of his life, and thereby it also lays bare the process of the production of the social relations of his life, and of the mental conceptions that flow from those relations' (*C I*, 493, fn. 4 [MEW 23/392 et sq., fn. 89]). Then, in the context of the history of technology, quite surprisingly, follows a comparison with the critique of religion and its reductive analysis (already critically addressed in *ThF* 4) 'that is written in abstraction from this material basis [...]. It is, in reality, much easier to discover by analysis the earthly kernel of the misty creation of religion than to do the opposite, i.e. to develop from the actual, given relations of life the forms in which these have been apotheosised. The latter method is the only materialist, and therefore the only scientific one' (*C I*, 493 et sq., fn. 4).

Marx's operative concept of dialectics, that is to say, not so much the one described in forewords or letters but rather that which he actually applies in his masterpiece – incidentally, in the form of a genetic reconstruction of the transitions from one level of complexity to the next (**Haug** 2006a, 14th Lecture) – adheres to this very programme, *mutatis mutandis*, in the field of theorising capitalism. Neither is it that of **Hegel**'s conceptual dialectics (*Begriffsdialektik*) nor that of the 'subject-object dialectic' that took centre stage within Critical Theory circles and among Yugoslavian Marxists during the 1960s and 70s. It is

rather the programme of the dialectic of '[individual] behaviour and [social] relations' or 'inter-subjective action and structural conditions' (**Haug** 2006a, 61), alongside an analysis of how the deep-seated contradictions of such relations can find forms of movement at other levels or, in more general terms, how those forms emerge in which 'real contradictions' find 'room to move' (*C I*, 198 [23/118]).

As **Marx** follows the valorisation process along its various stages and points of transition, analysing the obstacles and illustrating how they are overcome, his law of value shifts, increasingly clearly, from the eternity of the motionless mover to the flow of movement and from absolutism to relativism, from the system to a field of competing, mutually interdependent actions. It turns out that the value substance, which Marx already refers to in *C I* as 'equal, or abstract, human labour' (*C I*, 137 [MEW 23/61]) and, previously, in *CCPE*, as 'universal social labour' (MECW 29/286 [MEW 13/32]), in other words, the pivotal point around which everything else revolves, is 'not a ready-made prerequisite but an emerging result' (ibid.). On the whole, over the course of this praxeologically-based genetic reconstruction, it becomes increasingly evident that capitalism is a 'mode of production whose laws can only assert themselves as blindly operating averages between constant irregularities' (*C I*, 196 [MEW 23/117]). In other words: the law of value can only be understood as a retroactively 'regulating result' of countless different interdependent economic forms of behaviour in such relations and, in this sense, always as a merely '*resulting law*' (**Haug** 1972, 569; once again: 2006a, 243).

3. Given that 'the much-celebrated "philosophy of praxis" [has] no other origin than **Labriola**'s *Essays*' (**Labica** 1988a, 11), the recognition and theoretical implementation of the politically required change in direction that **Labriola** initiated during the first crisis of Marxism increasingly reveals itself to be a veritable reorganisation of Marxism – which, in Georges **Labica**'s view, justifiably makes him one of the 'co-founders of the theory' (1988b, 107) of Marxism.

3.1 **Labriola**, whose turn to Marxism – as the result of extensive studies – came at a rather late point in life and who maintained written correspondence with **Engels** from 1890 until shortly before the latter's death (1895), states in 1897: 'Scholasticism is already conducted in the name of **Marx**' (*SocPh*, 150; transl. mod.). As a case in point, he invokes nothing less than dialectics. The 'formal aspects of Marxism' (ibid.) can be easily learned, whereas 'the greatest difficulty in the understanding and further elaboration of historical materialism' (ibid.) in his view lies in gaining 'knowledge of the objects in which those forms are immanent' (ibid.; transl. mod.). **Labriola**'s explanation as to what this means

echoes **Marx**'s reflection on his dialectical method in the *Postface* to the Second Edition of *C I*, in which he notes that inquiry must first 'appropriate the material in detail, to analyse its different forms of development and to track down their inner connection' (*C I*, 102) before it can be represented 'as being in a fluid state' (103 [MEW 23/27 et sq.]). **Labriola** deduces from this insight that if one deems the term dialectics to denote 'that rhythmic movement of understanding which reproduces the general outline of reality in the making' (*SocPh*, 148), this holds the risk of falling into '*a priori* diagrams, or into scholasticism' (149) and thus of the conception of dialectics relapsing into metaphysics. 'In short, a definition placed at the beginning of a study is meaningless. Definitions take on a meaning only when genetically developed' (150). All efforts must be constantly directed at genetically reproducing the specific rhythm of a concrete, emerging reality in one's thinking. Labriola therefore – and owing to the frequent adulteration the term "dialectics" is subjected to – also speaks of the 'genetic method' (*HM-P*, 100) of historical materialism, although what he really means is the **Marx**ian conception of dialectics.

And if human reality is the object of cognition, the essential rhythm of becoming is that of human agency, of active behaviour in interaction with the respective relations. 'Understood as the contradictoriness and reciprocity of all relations, dialectics (the formative logic of reality and the syntax of its rational perception) indeed constitutes the centrepiece of **Labriola**'s Marxism', **Burgio** states, and the 'concept of praxis' – 'the site of a convergence of action and knowledge', just like it was for Giambattista **Vico** and, before him, for Giordano **Bruno** – is 'where the synthesis of philosophy and science becomes reality' (**Burgio** 2012). In short – and open to interpretation in both directions of the epistemological relationship: 'reality is recognised in and through activity' (ibid.). As **Labriola** notes, 'the realistic process […] leads from labour, which is cognition through activity [*un conoscere operando*], to cognition as an abstract theory' (*SocPh*, 60; transl. mod.). In his view, this is the reason for **Marx**'s remark that **Hegel**'s dialectics needed to be 'inverted, in order to discover the rational kernel within the mystical shell' (*C I*, 103 [MEW 23/27]). 'So, no eschatology, but an enthusiasm for genesis, for change and for the specific laws' as well as a call for philosophical independence and coherence (**De Giovanni** 1988, 160).

3.2 **Engels**'s death had a profound impact on the development of the social democratic movement. Given the parting of this universally accepted referee, it suddenly found itself thrown on its own feet. Engels's fear, following **Marx**'s death, that '[l]ocal bigwigs and lesser luminaries, if not imposters, will be given a free hand' (**Engels** to **Sorge**, 15 March 1883, MECW 46/462 [MEW 35/460]), now materialised in the form of a 'clamour of discussion' (**Labriola**, quoted in **Lux-**

emburg, GW 6, 264). **Labica** speaks of a 'transition', a 'kind of fair [*foire*], not to say semi-debacle' (1979, 19); to him, **Labriola** and Georgi V. **Plekhanov** stand out from this confusion, as he considers each of them to make an effort – each in their own way – to 'productively continue the undertaking launched by **Marx** and **Engels**' (ibid.).

In this situation, **Labriola** and **Plekhanov**, 13 years younger, pursue the dissemination and a renewal of the theory at once. In the name of an integral, holistic conception of the social process, they concur in their critique of the so-called 'theory of factors'. Each of the two is concerned with the substance of the materialism in **Marx** and **Engels**'s theory. **Labriola**'s *Historical Materialism* in 1896 is followed in 1897 by **Plekhanov**'s critical riposte in *The Materialist Conception of History*; both proceed from the work of **Marx** and **Engels.** As **Labica** remarks, they are two individuals 'who truly consulted the sources' (1979, 26). **Plekhanov**, however, repeatedly overlooks that **Labriola**, in those instances that he criticises, is in fact referring to **Engels**'s Letters on Historical Materialism (from 1890–95) [*Altersbriefe*] that he wrote during the last years of his life.

These differences, which may at first glance appear minor or merely as a matter of wording, take effect historically via their students: **Plekhanov** through **Lenin**, who respects him as his philosophical mentor; **Labriola** through Antonio **Gramsci.**

Marx's initial 'path towards a new, "critical philosophy" [...] turned into a path that led away from philosophy' (**Koivisto** 1990, 524) without replacing it with anything. The negation of a Marxist philosophy – and even of the sense and possibility of such a philosophy – had, on the one hand, paved the way for neo-Kantianism to offer the Marxist workers' movement its epistemology and ethics based on the philosophy of consciousness and, on the other, enabled positivist influences.

Labriola's strategic intervention in this particular configuration occurs in the third of his three famous treatises, a series of fictional letters to Georges **Sorel** (April to September 1897), which he publishes under the title *Socialism and Philosophy*. His intervention consists in declaring – ultimately in opposition to **Marx** and **Engels**'s farewell to philosophy – historical materialism to be the theory of the revolutionary workers' movement and making it the centrepiece of a Marxist identity. He had understood that without the 'assimilation' of philosophy, Marxists would have 'no real understanding of materialism' (**Labica** 1979, 18). The fact that he conceives of this philosophy as 'the *philosophy of practice*' (*SocPh*, 60) and attributes it, as an underlying precept, to historical materialism, appears, in hindsight, as 'an ingenious simplification of its [Marxism's] philosophical identity' (**De Giovanni** 1988, 162).

At the same time, **Labriola**, who regards "Marxism" as 'a symbol and compendium of a many-sided tendency and a complex theory' (*SocPh*, 29), 'perhaps precisely because he was not yet able to refer to an existing tradition', is aware of the problems associated with a "Marxist philosophy" (**Koivisto** 1990, 525). According to **Labriola**, the theory must be understood 'in its most intimate bearings, or the whole theory in its entirety [...] as a philosophy [...]. And when I say philosophy, I know well that I may be misunderstood' (*SocPh*, 14). **Labriola** claims 'that this theory carries with it the conditions and expressions of its own philosophy' (30). Historical materialism, he states, will be 'disseminated, refined and more clearly outlined; it will have its own history. Its specific colouring may vary from one country to another [...]. What matters is that its core is preserved, its *philosophy*, so to speak. This includes postulates such as the following: the nature of man, i.e., the historical development of humankind, lies in the development of praxis – and "praxis" implies, in this all-encompassing sense, a resolution of the usual separation of theory and practice. After all, history, to put it another way, is really the history of labour. And given that labour, conceptualised in this holistic way, implies the correspondingly proportioned and proportional development of intellectual and physical capacities, the concept of the history of labour, moreover, implies the necessarily social form of this labour and the changes in this form; historical man is always social man, and any notion of pre-social or super-social man is a figment of the imagination' (42 et sq.; transl. mod.).

The praxis concept, in its range of applicability regarding society and its history, is an integral concept; it cuts across all social divisions of labour and their classificatory derivatives. 'All social life is essentially *practical*' (*ThF* 8, MECW 5/5 [MEW 3/7]). **Labriola**'s theoretical elaboration of the concept resists any dualism or reductionism.

Just like **Epicurus** renders the actual world conceivable by introducing deviation to the rigid mechanical determinism of **Democritus** and thereby, as the young **Marx** illustrates in his doctoral dissertation, creates the 'basis for praxis-based thinking' (**Haug** 2006b, 36), **Labriola**, for his part, applies the concept of epigenesis, which had gained scientific recognition in the context of embryology during the first half of the 19th cent. According to this concept, the emerging organism is able, over the course of its evolution, to develop phenotypical traits from the fertilised egg that are not predetermined by the genome. **Labriola** transfers this notion to the determination – albeit only 'in the final analysis' (**Engels** to **Bloch**, 21–22 September 1890, MECW 49/35 [MEW 37/463]), as he puts it, citing **Engels** – of the historical process by the 'mode of production of material life', which, according to **Marx**, 'conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life' (*Preface* 1859, MECW 29/263 [MEW 13/8 et sq.]).

To **Labriola**, therefore, the term *tendency*, which **Marx** uses in *C 1* to denote objectively given but not directly manifested regularities, is essential for the theory of historical materialism whenever addressing processes mediated through praxis or activity. 'If I had to give some sort of an outline, it would not be out of place to say that the philosophy, which historical materialism implies, is *the tendency toward monism*. And my use of the word tendency is fully intentional. By tendency, I mean a *critical, formal tendency*. The aim is not to return to a theosophical or metaphysical intuition of the world's totality [...] The word tendency conveys precisely that familiarisation of the mind with the conviction that everything is conceivable as in the making, and, indeed, that even the conceivable is but in the making, and that the process of becoming is similar in character to continuity' (*SocPh*, 84; transl. mod.).

The 'genetic, evolutionary or dialectic [conception]' (*HM-P*, 64) in accordance with **Marx** must take this into account. Instead of deducing from the economic sphere, 'we must [...] make a supreme effort of thought, with the aim of triumphing over the multi-faceted spectacle of immediate experience to arrange its elements in a genetic order' (68; transl. mod.), so that 'the specialised, critical and contextual inquiry into the historical facts [...] [is] the sole source of that concrete and positive knowledge needed for the complete development of economic materialism' (69; transl. mod.). Once again, we are reminded of Marx's remark about the logics of his studies as the precondition for the dialectical presentability of their subject-matter (*C 1*, 102 [MEW 23/27]).

Here, **Plekhanov** intervenes. Indeed, he has no doubt that '**Labriola** perfectly realises what kind of actual relations are concealed behind such a conflict of concepts. But when he comes to particulars, he lays down his materialist weapons in the face of the difficulties of the problem and considers it possible [...] to confine oneself to adducing ignorance or the power of tradition as an explanation' (1897/2004, 36). **Plekhanov** concludes his text with the statement that, '[f]rom the standpoint of the modern materialist conception of history, [...] it becomes clear that men do not make several distinct histories – the history of law, the history of morals, the history of philosophy, etc. – but only one history, the history of their own social relations, which are determined by the state of the productive forces in each particular period. *What is known as the ideologies is nothing but a multiform reflection in the minds of men of this single and indivisible history*' (43). The philosophy of Marxism he envisions is called 'dialectical materialism', and it '[explains] the activity of social man by his needs and by the means and methods of satisfying them prevailing at the given time' (PW 2, 15). In Plekhanov's *Essays on the History of Materialism*, the economic relations of domination, too, are subjected to this reductionism: 'Production relations are an effect; productive forces are a *cause*' (147). The actual

historical element, namely that which, "in final analysis", is determined by the economic basis and simultaneously shaped by contingent circumstances and mutually thwarting strategies, is lost here in the logical consequence of deductive reasoning. Correspondingly, Plekhanov pronounces **Marx** the 'father of present-day dialectical materialism' (136). The name by which a materialist *prima philosophia* or metaphysics is later institutionalised in the Soviet Union – the application of which to history is supposedly the precondition for *historical materialism* to emerge in the first place – is thus readily available.

Furthermore, in his *Fundamental Problems of Marxism*, **Plekhanov** asserts 'that **Marx**'s epistemology stems directly from [...] the epistemology of **Feuerbach**' (PW 3, 129). According to **Plekhanov**, **Marx** merely adopted **Feuerbach**'s materialist sensualism – which is embedded in the architecture of the philosophy of consciousness, and according to which, as the term already suggests, sensuous perceptions are passively experienced – and expanded it by the dimension of human action upon objects, to which, in turn, '[i]t may of course be objected, in defence of Feuerbach, that, in the process of *our acting* upon objects, we cognise their properties only in the measure in which they, for their part, act upon us' (128).

Due to its one-sided reception in **Lenin**, **Plekhanov**'s philosophical design will go on to form the matrix of Soviet ideology and thus have a world-historical impact, albeit with an altered substance.

4. Determinism and voluntarism are the two antagonistic focal points of **Lenin**'s ideological ellipsis. This particular contradiction continues to haunt theoretical reflection in Marxism-Leninism henceforth, although **Lukács** diagnoses that since **Stalin**, political practice [*Praxis*] is marked by the fact that 'the general theory sinks into being a trimming, a superstructure, an embellishment, which no longer has any influence on the tactical decision' (*Conversations with Lukács*, 153).

4.1 In his *Conspectus of Hegel's Science of Logic* (1914), in whose index the term 'praxis/practice' is among the concepts with the highest number of references, **Lenin** translates some of **Hegel**'s statements he considers a 'close approach to materialism' (CW 38/286) into Marxist terms: 'Practice is higher than (theoretical) knowledge, for it has not only the dignity of universality, but also of immediate actuality' (213).

4.2 In his 1937 work *On Practice: On the Relation Between Knowledge and Practice, Between Knowing and Doing* (SelWks 1, 187–197), **Mao** seconds this statement. 'Practice', the core elements of which are productive activity and class

struggle, in his view comprises the participation in 'all spheres of the practical life of society. Thus man [...] comes to know the different relations between man and man, not only through his material life but also through his political and cultural life' (188). He depicts its relation to cognition as a kind of spiral motion in which praxis is the overarching factor: 'Discover the truth through practice, and again through practice verify and develop the truth. Start from perceptual knowledge and actively develop it into rational knowledge; then start from rational knowledge and actively guide revolutionary practice to change both the subjective and the objective world. Practice, knowledge, again practice, and again knowledge. This form repeats itself in endless cycles, [...] such is the dialectical-materialist theory of the unity of knowing and doing' (197).

4.3 In opposition to this, and often enough beside it, though unconnected, ML cultivated a resolutely objectivist materialism, not least based on **Stalin**'s work – circulated in countless editions and translations – *Dialectical and Historical Materialism*. This text asserts, for example, that class struggle and revolution represent 'a quite natural and inevitable phenomenon', just like the change of the aggregate state of water at 100 degrees Celsius, because 'the passing of slow quantitative changes into rapid and abrupt qualitative changes is a law of development' (*History of the CPSU*, 111). Here, the moment of praxis is erased altogether, while the dialectical moment is reduced to objectivist mechanics and the 'things in flux' are transformed 'into something fixed' (**Brecht** in his *Journals*, 6 January 1948; 1993, 384).

4.4 Yet, below and within the official ideological ML codified by **Stalin** there were numerous attempts to reassert the aspect of praxis in the philosophical and theoretical reasoning of Marxist materialism and its dialectical nucleus. In part, such approaches were able to proceed from **Lenin**'s *Philosophical Notebooks*, which, during the 1960s, resonated among an innovative 'undercurrent' of 'Late Soviet Philosophy' (**Maidansky**/**Oittinen** 2016, with reference to **Bakhtin**, **Lotman**, **Mamardashvili**, **Ilyenkov**, and others). In this perspective, *praxis* could be understood, in philosophical terms, as a material condition of objectivity.

4.5 In the GDR, a "praxis-materialist" discussion and research circle formed around Helmut **Seidel** in Leipzig, where Ernst **Bloch** had taught as well. Dieter **Wittich** subsequently writes in the (Marxist-Leninist) *Philosophisches Wörterbuch* (Philosophical Dictionary), published in the GDR, that it is 'praxis in its totality that determines cognition, selects its objects, and conditions the

pace, extent, and depth of the study of these objects. Hence, knowledge reflects not only the facts it is based on, but also the praxis through which these facts were obtained' (1974, 971). He construes praxis as the medium 'through which humans can gain access to the objects [*Dinge*] of objective reality as well as their properties and relations in the first place' (966).

If it was still possible to interpret **Lenin**'s phrase, 'that man by his practice proves the objective correctness of his ideas, concepts, knowledge, science' (CW 38/191), in a pragmatist, reductionist manner, then such superficiality can be ruled out for all these "praxis-materialist" studies: in Marxist terms, activity, or, at a human level, the active engagement, or praxis, occupies a fundamental ontological status for an understanding of the dialectical process character of all things, without which materialism would be reduced to an idealism of matter in the form of dogmas.

4.6 In the West, the school of cultural-historical psychology, building largely on the writings of Lev S. **Vygotsky** from the late 1920s and 30s, and the so-called 'activity approach' became influential. In West Berlin, Klaus **Holzkamp** and Ute **Osterkamp** established Critical Psychology, which proceeded to a great extent from the 'natural-historical analyses and the activity concept' (**Stetsenko**/**Wille** 2012, 388) of Aleksei N. **Leontiev**. They based the new discipline upon the 'historical method' of genetic reconstruction, encompassing both nature and society, initially in the form of a critical reception of biological evolutionary studies and research in the field of animal-human transitions (see, for example, the works of Volker **Schurig**).

Holzkamp first outlined his theoretical principles in his 1973-publication *Sinnliche Erkenntnis* (Sensual Cognition); he then comprehensively expounded and systematically applied them in *Grundlegung der Psychologie* (Foundation of Psychology) from 1983. Organismic *activity* [*Aktivität*] and later, based on that, human *activity* [*Tätigkeit*], is ascribed the key role in asserting, in opposition to longstanding causal objectivist notions, a practical-materialist approach to development in the form of a genetic reconstruction that follows the historical trajectory of the social process (see, e.g., *SE*, 50). In this view, the objectively given conditions for a more advanced development must not be regarded as the latter's *cause* but as its conditions of possibility. Contrary to "objectivist" reductionism, Holzkamp shows how organismic activity, as it becomes more complex, increasingly assumes a mediating function for further or more advanced development. For Holzkamp, it will become key to understanding transition points and leaps in development.

But this explanation of all processes of life does not develop out of thin air. Even in reactions at the inorganic level, **Holzkamp** deems the supposed

passivity of one or both of the substances involved a mere illusion caused by '"anchoring" processes in the observer's *perception*' (*SE*, 68). 'Activity must therefore be understood as a fundamental characteristic of life, which merely assumes distinct forms at different levels of development. The asymmetry inherent in the metabolism, between the active organism on one side and the passive substances absorbed and processed by the organism on the other, may be regarded as a precursor of and the phylogenetic precondition for the subject-object mediation in human cognitive activity' (ibid.). However, he continues, the notion of a 'precursor' (*Vorform*) must be understood neither in causal genetic nor in teleological terms (ibid., fn. 19). Correspondingly, the development of certain sensory organs, for example, can only be understood as the '*historical expression of organisms' active engagement with their objective ecological conditions of existence*' (81).

5. Following the shift in development strategies in the People's Republic of China under **Deng** Xiaoping during the late 1970s, 'practical materialism' became the term by which Marxist philosophy was discussed. Although, two decades later, the objection was raised that it was 'not scientific to reduce Marxism to "practical-isms"' (**He** Zuorong 1998, 19), **Wu** Yuanliang nonetheless sensed that it 'is now accepted that practice is the most fundamental and important concept in Marxist philosophy, not only in terms of the previously accepted Marxist epistemology, but also in relation to the entirety of Marxist philosophy. […] Dialectical and historical materialism […] can thus be regarded as "practical materialism"' (1998, 7).

The questions raised by **Zhang** Yibing (1999) in this context were once again addressed and scrutinised, and, for the first time ever, based on a systematic study of the MEGA^2. He illustrates the shift in meaning of the term practice/*praxis* from the humanist-ethical behavioural obligation to the scientific analysis of the social relations of *praxis*. Without neglecting the continuity of the **Marx**ian theoretical progression, he traces the emergence of what would subsequently be referred to as the "Marxist" Marx, whose 'line of thinking could develop into a new model of practical materialism' (**Zhang** 2009/2014, 214), leading away from the pre-Marxist '[a]bstract, ahistorical' forms of 'practical philosophy and practical materialism' (249). Zhang points out the centrality of the period from 1845 to 1847 between the *Theses on Feuerbach* and *The Poverty of Philosophy* (written and published in French under the title *Misère de la philosophie*), during which the unpublished *German Ideology* was composed. 'Based on practical materialism, Marxism's theoretical focal point became research on the real, specific, historical, social relationships in a given social-historical period. He especially meditated on the scientific ontological qualifications of

historical existence' (xxxvi). Specifically, according to Zhang, this implied (and still implies), returning, again and again, to economics, which, contrary to what this reductionist term may suggest, really reflects essential social relations in the most comprehensive sense, within which the web of social practices is brought to bear. Zhang regards the genetic-reconstructive, critical-dialectical mode of representing these relations by **Marx** in the *Grundrisse* and later in *Capital* as '(scientific), critical, historical phenomenology' (e.g., 398), whose *immediate* object 'is not substantive material, but rather a reified relationship, an inverted, relational material' (411), whose essence never appears as direct or immediate and is rendered comprehensible only by Marx and his 'indirect scientific [analytical] abstractions' (value form, mode of production, relations of production, etc.). If, as a result, 'we identify Marxist philosophy as practical materialism', then, according to **Zhang**, 'it can only be a historical, real, concrete practical materialism, a revolutionary, critical practical materialism' (254).

6. Under the impression of the imperialist World Wars and the aftermath of the October Revolution, **Labriola**, who had died some time before (1904), was more or less forgotten or discarded as outdated. The only one of his pathbreaking initiatives that has actually had an impact – via the intermediary **Plekhanov** – is his postulation of both the need for Marxist philosophy and its fundamental autonomy, whereas his principled anti-dogmatic and anti-ideological message fell prey to the needs of official state ideology.

Over the course of the erosion and eventual collapse of European state socialism at the end of the 20th cent., **Plekhanov** rapidly faded, ultimately sinking more or less into obscurity, whereas **Labriola** increasingly appeared as a surprisingly up-to-date thinker. His insistence on the 'need for a general philosophy […] and the definition of this general philosophy as philosophy of practice' appears, historically speaking, 'more than sufficient' to 'award him the status of such an exceptional figure that his doctrine was considered adequate for the party' (**Jaulin** 1988, 198). His basic concepts increasingly become noticeable as "subtext", including in **Gramsci**'s *Prison Notebooks*, which lends 'consistency and coherence' (**Burgio** 2014, 468) to the work of both.

6.1 In the early 1930s, in the dungeons of fascist Italy, **Gramsci** addresses the epistemological problem expressed in **Engels**'s phrase that the world's 'materiality […] is proved […] by a long and wearisome development of philosophy and natural science' (MECW 25/41 [MEW 20/41]), though the gradual impact of this effort will not materialise until decades later. He does so because he understands that traditional Marxism has become entangled in an architecture in which metaphysical, or 'philosophical materialism' is suffocating historical materialism.

Gramsci, for his part, invokes 'practical activity', which constitutes 'the dialectical mediation between man and nature' (*SPN*, 392, 446). He conceives it as 'the elementary historical cell', which, through 'the rise of the experimental method[,] separates two historical worlds, two epochs, and initiates the process of dissolution of theology and metaphysics and the process of development of modern thought whose consummation is historical materialism' (446) – or 'the philosophy of praxis', as it reads in the reworked version. 'Scientific experiment is the first cell of the new method of production [...]. The scientist-experimenter is also a worker, not a pure thinker, and his thought is continually controlled by practice and vice versa' (ibid.).

6.2 Thus, it appears as if **Gramsci** were calling for **Labriola**'s help in his *Prison Notebooks*. Indeed, he considers Labriola to be 'the only man who has attempted to build up the philosophy of praxis scientifically' (*SPN*, 387). In **Gramsci**'s view, this underscores the necessity 'to bring **Labriola** back into circulation and to make his way of posing the philosophical problem predominant' (338).

Labriola's experience with the leadership of the Italian socialists, on one side, and with the first 'crisis of Marxism' on the other, and, moreover, with **Plekhanov**'s criticism *in statu nascendi*, is institutionally replicated and cemented 25 years later, following the First World War, the October Revolution, and the split of the workers' movement into social democrats and communists. Neither of the two sides ever seriously adopted **Labriola**'s basic notion 'that the philosophy of Marxism is contained within Marxism itself' (*PN* 2, N. 3, § 31, 30) and thus his 'affirmation of the independence and originality of a new culture in incubation' (*SPN*, 398). Instead, the reformist camp is dominated by combinations with neo-Kantianism and positivism, the revolutionary camp by those with pre-Marxian philosophical or metaphysical materialism. **Gramsci** considers the latter to be 'an infantile deviation of the philosophy of praxis generated by the baroque conviction that the more one goes back to "material" objects the more orthodox one must be' (461).

Through the prism of his theory of hegemony, **Gramsci** elaborates in detail the severalfold relevance of the foundation of historical materialism as a philosophy of praxis initiated by **Labriola**. **Gramsci** sees **Labriola** 'at the centre of a complicated intersection (one of the most vexing of the *Notebooks*) of philosophy (history and critique of philosophy) and politics (in the relation of osmosis/sublation of "pure" theory)' (**Burgio** 2014, 438). By having 'at last, freed philosophy from its contemplative cage' and 'released the thinking from the prison of transcendence' (442) in his *Theses on Feuerbach*, **Marx** initiated the 'dialectical mediation and synthesis' (428) of popular and high culture. At the same time, he thereby 'emancipated matter from the *splendid isolation*, which

the "old philosophies" had confined it to in order to substantiate the image of a motionless, crystallised and timeless world, […] protected from the disconcerting spectre of change'.

6.3 A paradigmatic example of this is **Labriola**'s following interpretation – which **Gramsci** also adopts – of the experimental procedure in the natural sciences: 'By experimenting, we become co-workers of nature. We *artificially* produce things which nature produces out of itself. Through the means of experiment, things cease to be mere rigid objects of contemplation, because they are generated under our command. And thought ceases to be a premise, or a paradigmatic preconception of things, and becomes a concrete thing, because it *grows in parallel with the things*, and because, to the extent that we learn to understand them, it increasingly conflates with these things' (*SocPh*, 65; transl. mod.). This is based on **Labriola**'s dynamic ontological assertion that 'things are themselves in the making [*un fare / un producirsi*]' (85). Labriola generally regards historical materialism as 'the process of becoming, or evolution, [it] is real and deals with reality itself. Just as labour, which is the self-development of man, is real […]. By this practical inversion of the problem of cognition we confide ourselves wholly to the hands of science, which is our work' (88; transl. mod.). This is, moreover, the essential opposing stance vis-à-vis positivist scientism.

Gramsci captures this relationship between praxis and the process of "becoming" inherent in things and relations in the phrase 'that philosophy's "historicity" means nothing other than its "practical nature"' (*FS*, N. 10, § 31, 535) and 'that the practical work of creating history also creates "implicit" philosophy, […] as problems of knowledge ensue which, over and above the "practical" form of solution, sooner or later find theoretical form through the work of specialists, after having immediately found their naïve form in popular common sense, i.e. among the practical agents of historical transformations' (540).

Gramsci's aim is to wrest the claim to Marxist orthodoxy from the so-called 'orthodox' Marxists. The new orthodoxy is to be defined, proceeding from **Labriola**'s approach, in a way that protects this term from a potential association with scholastic dogmatism (or rather, which posits it in opposition to the latter). Given that Labriola's philosophical positions are 'little known outside a restricted circle' (*PN* 2, N. 3, § 31, 30), **Gramsci** does not hesitate to liken their fate, in allusion to Rosa **Luxemburg**, to the theoretical positions of **Marx** (ibid.). According to **Luxemburg**, **Marx**'s 'materialist-dialectical conception of history' constitutes 'nothing more than a method of investigation, as a few inspired leading thoughts, which offer us glimpses into the entirely new world', and which, incidentally, 'lies fallow' (2010 [1903], 73), because only 'in proportion

as our movement progresses, and demands the solution of new practical problems do we dip once more into the treasury of Marx's thought, in order to extract therefrom and to utilise new fragments of his doctrine' (79).

So, this is the essence of **Labriola**'s guiding concepts in the eyes of **Gramsci**. They become relevant 'from the moment in which a subaltern group becomes really autonomous and hegemonic, thus bringing into being a new form of State', and the 'need to construct a new intellectual and moral order [arises], that is, a new type of society, and hence the need to develop more universal concepts and more refined and decisive ideological weapons. That is why it is necessary to bring **Labriola** back into circulation and to make his way of posing the philosophical problem predominant. One can thus open the struggle for an autonomous and superior culture, the positive part of the struggle whose negative and polemical manifestations bear names with the privative "a-" and "anti-" (anti-clericalism, atheism etc.)' (*SPN*, 388 – transl. mod.).

6.4 In a world which, at the beginning of the 21st cent., has once again radically changed, **Labriola**'s insights, which **Gramsci** conveyed to the 20th cent., acquire renewed topicality for a rejuvenation of Marxist thought with a practical perspective after the demise of European state socialism. A fresh start, proceeding from **Marx**, drawing on him and going beyond him, is certainly in good hands when entrusted to **Labriola**, with his 'brilliant flash of genius and discovery' (**Labica** 1988b, 115) of the philosophy of praxis and his posthumous student **Gramsci** as well as their concurring understanding of concrete reality as the 'most sought-after object of dialectical thinking' (**Sacristán** 1969, 17).

7. The **Marx** of *Capital* regards praxis analysis as the operative key to attaining his objective of 'regard[ing] every historically developed form as being in a fluid state' (*C I*, 103 [MEW 23/28]). At a more elementary level, this defines dialectics as the link between praxeology and history. 'Marx was close to **Hegel**', the staunch Hegel critic Louis **Althusser** concedes, 'but above all *for reasons which are not mentioned*', including 'in his critique of the cogito, of the sensualist-empiricist subject and of the transcendental subject, this in his critique of the ideal of a theory of knowledge' (*EssSelfCrit*, 178). What he overlooks, however, is that **Marx** accomplishes the crucial step out of the Cartesian cage in *ThF* 1, which, leaving metaphysics behind, inevitably had to lead to the terrain of *praxis*, the concept of which **Althusser** mocks as 'the unknown transcendental subject' – 'the same way that we speak of the "unknown soldier" as a specimen of his species' – and the philosophy of which he apparently regards as neo-Kantian (1982/1995, 11), as he suspects it to entail a philosophy of the subject.

In contrast, Chilean Marxist Jaime **Massardo**, drawing on **Labriola**, ascribes full historical-material validity to *praxis*: 'In order to satisfy their (material, affective, spiritual, intellectual, existential, artistic …) needs, people work and strive to change the natural environment and their relations with other people. These needs constitute the demiurge of human activity. It is precisely in the quest to satisfy these needs that praxis is reversed, "displaced", while simultaneously changing the people who engage in it. Here, we thus encounter the essential category of the Marxian conception of history' (2012, 32 et sq.). PDM is able to scientifically decipher the historical refraction of the merciless severity of this reversal in antagonistic relations – namely in the bourgeois-capitalist form of consequences of actions, which develop independently via the market and rebound on the actors. **Marx**'s 'new' materialism is historical because it is practical-dialectical. It is concerned with a self-determined historical capacity to act, with the prospect of a solidarity-based socialisation that overcomes class rule and protects the 'original sources of all wealth' (*C 1*, 638 [MEW 23/530]) – the planet and human workers – from ruthless exploitation.

Wolfgang Fritz Haug
Translated by Jan-Peter Herrmann

Bibliography

L. **Althusser**, *Essays in Self-Criticism*, transl. G. Lock, London-New York 1976.

L. **Althusser**, 'Die Veränderung der Welt hat kein Subjekt: Notiz zu den *Thesen über Feuerbach*' (1982), transl. from the French by B. Heber-Schärer, *Neue Rundschau*, vol. 106, 1995, no. 3, 9–16.

K. **v. Beyme**, *Sozialismus: Theorien des Sozialismus, Anarchismus und Kommunismus im Zeitalter der Ideologien 1789–1945*, Wiesbaden 2013.

M. **Buhr**, A. **Kosing**, *Kleines Wörterbuch der marxistisch-leninistischen Philosophie*, 2nd revised and expanded edn., Berlin/GDR 1974.

B. **Brecht**, *Journals 1934–1955*, transl. H. Rorrison, ed. J. Willett, New York-London 1993.

A. **Burgio**, 'Antonio Labriola', *Enciclopedia Italiana di scienze, lettere ed arti. Ottava appendice. Il contributo italiano alla storia del pensiero. Filosofia*, ed. M. Ciliberto, Rome 2012, 527–37 (quoted acc. to www).

A. **Burgio**, *Gramsci: Il sistema in movimento*, Rome 2014.

R. **Carocci**, *Antonio Labriola nel socialismo romano di fine Ottocento: Attività, influenze, riflessoni*, Rome 2016 (www).

Conversations with Lukács: Hans Heinz Holz, Leo Kofler, Wolfgang Abendroth, ed. T. Pinkus, Cambridge (MA) 1974.

B. **De Giovanni**, 'Pour Labriola', transl. from the Italian by E. Ornato, G. Labica, J. Texier (eds.), *Labriola d'un siècle à l'autre*, Paris 1988, 159–62.

W.F. **Haug**, 'Die Bedeutung von Standpunkt und sozialistischer Perspektive für die Kritik der politischen Ökonomie', *Argument* 74, vol. 14, 1972, no. 7/8, 561–85.

W.F. **Haug**, 'Was soll materialistische Erkenntnistheorie?' *Argument* 81, vol. 15, 1973, no. 7/8, 559–73.

W.F. **Haug**, *Vorlesungen zur Einführung ins 'Kapital'* (1974), revised version, Hamburg 2005.

W.F. **Haug**, 'Für eine materialistisch-dialektische Begründung des dialektischen Materialismus', *Argument* 108, vol. 20, 1978, no. 2, 186–201.

W.F. **Haug**, *Neue Vorlesungen zur Einführung ins 'Kapital'*, Hamburg 2006a.

W.F. **Haug**, *Einführung in marxistisches Philosophieren: Die Abschiedsvorlesung*, Hamburg 2006b.

W.F. **Haug**, *Das 'Kapital' lesen – aber wie? Materialien zur Philosophie und Epistemologie der marxschen Kapitalismuskritik*, BB 16, Hamburg 2013.

He Zuorong, 'My Understanding of Marxist Philosophy', *Social Sciences in China*, vol. 19, 1998, no. 2, 19–24.

A. **Jaulin**, 'Gramsci, lecteur de Labriola: Labriola, l'exception', G. Labica, J. Texier (eds.), *Labriola d'un siècle à l'autre*, Paris 1988, 189–98.

J. **Koivisto**, 'Umkämpfte Philosophie: Marx, Labriola, Gramsci', *Argument* 182, vol. 32, 1990, no. 4, 519–29.

G. **Labica**, 'Le matérialisme marxiste au XIXe siècle: Remarques sur le débat Plekhanov–Labriola', *Raison présente* 51, July–September 1979, 15–31.

G. **Labica**, 'Présentation', Labica/Texier 1988a, 9–11.

G. **Labica**, 'En relisant les Essais', Labica/Texier 1988b, 107–17.

G. **Labica**, J. **Texier** (eds.), *Labriola d'un siècle à l'autre*, Paris 1988.

V.A. **Lektorsky**, *The Problem of the Subject and Object in Classical and Modern Bourgeois Philosophy*, Moscow 1965.

R. **Luxemburg**, 'Stagnation and Progress of Marxism' (1903), P. LeBlanc, H.C. Scott (eds.), *Socialism or Barbarism: The Selected Writings of Rosa Luxemburg*, London-New York 2010.

A. **Maidansky**, V. **Oittinen** (eds.), *The Practical Essence of Man: The "Activity Approach" in Late Soviet Philosophy*, Leiden 2016.

J. **Massardo**, *Gramsci en Chile: Apuntes para el estudio crítico de una experiencia de difusión cultural*, Santiago de Chile 2012.

G.V. **Plekhanov**, *Essays in the History of Materialism* (*1896*), New York 1967.

G.V. **Plekhanov**, 'The Materialist Conception of History (1891)', *Selected Philosophical Works*, vol. 2, Moscow 1976, 222–50.

G.V. **Plekhanov**, 'Fundamental Problems of Marxism (1908)', *Selected Philosophical Works*, vol. 3, Moscow 1976, 117–83.

M. **Sacristán**, 'Por qué leer a Labriola', Foreword to A. Labriola, *Socialismo y filosofía*, transl. from the Italian by M. Sacristán, Madrid 1969, 7–26.

J. **Stalin**, 'Dialectical and Historical Materialism', first pub. in *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (*Bolsheviks*)*: Short Course*, ed. by a comm. of the CC of the CPSU(B), New York 1939.

A. **Stetsenko**, C. **Wille**, 'Kulturhistorische Schule', HKWM 8/1, 2012, 378–92.

D. **Wittich**, 'Praxis', PhWb [Philosophical Dictionary], 1974, 964–71.

Wu Yuanliang, 'A Retrospective on and Projected New Horizons in Research on Marxist Philosophy', *Social Sciences in China*, vol. 19, 1998, no. 2, 7–11.

Zhang Yibing, *Back to Marx: Changes of Philosophical Discourse in the Context of Economics* (1999), ed. O. Corff, transl. from the 2nd exp. Chinese edn. (2009) by T. Mitchell, Göttingen 2014.

→ action potence/agency, activity, anti-ideology, concept, contemplative materialism, consciousness, Critical Psychology, critique of Hegel, Cultural-historical School, derivation/deduction/backtracing, determinism, dialectical materialism, dialectics, dialectics of nature, dogmatism, economism, epistemology, ethical socialism, experiment, form, fundamental question of philosophy, genesis, Gramscianism, historical materialism, historical/logical, idealism/materialism, immaterial, indeterminism, inner world/outside world, interior/exterior, intervening thought, knowledge, labour/work, logical method, Marxism-Leninism, material, materialism (mechanical), matter, metaphilosophy, metaphysics, method, neo-Kantianism, object, objectivism, ontology, orthodoxy, philosophy of praxis (or practice), positivism, praxeological class theory, praxis, Praxis Group, reality, solidarity, standpoint/perspective, sublation of philosophy, substantially/consisting of substance, science, scientific world view, tendency/tendency law, theory of ideology

→ Ableitung, anschauender Materialismus, Antiideologie, Arbeit, Aufhebung der Philosophie, Begriff, Bewusstsein, Determinismus, Dialektik, dialektischer Materialismus, Dogmatismus, eingreifendes Denken, Erkenntnis, Erkenntnistheorie, ethischer Sozialismus, Experiment, Form, Gegenstand, Genesis, Gramscismus, Grundfrage der Philosophie, Handlungsfähigkeit, Hegel-Kritik, historischer Materialismus, Historisches/Logisches, Idealismus/Materialismus, Ideologietheorie, immateriell, Indeterminismus, innen/außen, Innenwelt/Außenwelt, Kritische Psychologie, Kulturhistorische Schule, logische Methode, Marxismus-Leninismus, Materialismus (mechanischer), Materie, materiell, Metaphilosophie, Metaphysik, Methode, Naturdialektik, Neukantianismus, Objektivismus, Ökonomismus, Ontologie, Orthodoxie, Philosophie der Praxis,

Positivismus, praxeologische Klassentheorie, Praxis, Praxis-Gruppe, Praxisphilosophie, Solidarität, Standpunkt/Perspektive, stofflich, Tätigkeit, Tendenz/Tendenzgesetz, Wirklichkeit, Wissenschaft, wissenschaftliche Weltanschauung

CHAPTER 31

Memory Work, Effort of Remembering

A: ʿamal taḏakkurī. – F: travail de mémoire, travail mnésique. – G: Erinnerungsarbeit. – R: trud pamjati. – S: trabajo de rememoración. – C: jìyì gōngzuò 记忆工作

The MW method was developed in order to comprehend women's experiences. Without understanding experience, there are no 'grounds from which to dispute patriarchal norms' (**Grosz** 1990, 94). MW is not based on the assumption that experience is evident or given and unproblematic. Like the autobiography, MW 'positions an experiencing and comprehending subject at the heart of intellectual and research life' (**Stanley** 1996, 47). The memories produced through MW provide "snapshots" of subjectivities appearing within (and from) discursive contradictions. Experience cannot be presumed to be 'the authoritative (because seen or felt) evidence that grounds what is known, but rather that which we seek to explain, that about which knowledge is produced' (**Scott** 1993, 410). The aim is to find a method that arrives at a form of narrating what would otherwise be left "behind", through which individuals can make their experiences comprehensible. When possible, these forms create 'a narrative armour, through which the subject tries to stabilize itself' (**Bay** 1995, 17).

Frigga **Haug** developed MW as a method (1983) to record women's remembered experiences in order to decode how they are constructed within group discussions. In the process of remembering events that are subjectively meaningful, how they are perceived is reflected as well. The method assumes that, 'everything that gets remembered is, therefore, relevant to tracing identity' (23). What is remembered is remembered because it is problematic or strange. Something can be considered enigmatic, complex, or contradictory because it deviates from what is given as self-evident. As a matter of fact, it is the "other" at the heart of the self that forms the very condition for the possibility of this self (**Butler** 1990).

In order to remember, it is necessary to concern oneself with the production of narrative forms (**Wertsch** 1985). **Shotter** (1993) stresses with **Billig** (1987) the role of difference and argumentation when participating in culture. A "living tradition" consists of dilemmas that require different subjective standpoints (cf. **Stephenson** et al. 1997). MW is interested in "how" and "why" individuals position themselves towards the dilemmas of everyday life. It strives to close

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_032
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

the gaps between knowledge and experience in such a way as to change the nature of experience and make it more socially actionable (**Schratz-Hadwich** 1995).

MW is carried out within the collective. In 'the claim to want to derive knowledge from lived experience about the way in which the individual embeds itself within relations [...], lies a plea for a particular method. If we comprehend ourselves not as a set of reactions and social relations as overpowering structures that shape us, but rather search within our experiences to find where our possible actions lie, then the usual social science research which treats individuals as objects [...] is out of the question' (**Haug** 1983, 11). The group is the subject of study, memories constitute the material; a collective process replaces the hierarchies between the "test administrator" and "test subject".

Remembered scenes are read as if they were stories. Like **Vygotsky**, Ursula **LeGuin** (1992) sees storytelling as 'a fundamental operation of the normal mind functioning in society. To learn to speak is to learn to tell a story' (39). The way we speak to others is reflected in our actions, in the events in our lives, and in our interactions with others, i.e. with ourselves.

The associated urge to create autobiographical legends with ideological myth-making is countered by the techniques of alienation that occur when writing in the third person. The (auto)-biography, on the other hand, facilitates a fictitious self-conformity which is concealed by the social: the past is interpreted as a precursor to what comes next. Above all, this type of ideological coherence is prevented via the politicisation of the personal in the group, helping to avoid psychologisation.

In writing, 'we step out of the ordinary and make public what happened to us [...]. Instead of accepting everyday life unconsciously, we bring it to light again in order to find the points at which we can fight back' (**Haug** 1983, 12). It is also important to recognise where this did not succeed. Analysing the scenes remembered is an attempt to reveal the social significance in the described plots and details and to revisit the process through which one arrived at that meaning. In this process of deconstruction (or of decoding what has been constructed), the ways in which women create meaning as well as appropriate and resist hegemonic and dominant discursive practices are highlighted and discussed. Each memory is examined for clichés, phrases, metaphors, and cultural constraints. Metaphors refer to latent meaning; what is absent signals problems and conflicts. 'In a certain sense, clichés are one of the ways we condemn ourselves to remain on the well-trodden path of what is expected. They hinder understanding' (33). **Crawford** et al. found that it was not conducive to start with what was obvious because this produced memories that were in a sense "rehearsed": 'The memories were rounded and smooth, they lacked any

sense of contradiction; their meanings in general were glib' (1992, 45 et sq.). Inconsistencies and contradictions were avoided. Working with texts enables researchers to grapple with that which is contentious and resistant to interpretation.

Lastly, MW also relies on making references to academic theories that occupy the field. The remembered material is examined and theorised within its theoretical context, which at the same time makes it possible to experience the limitations of these theories. The prevailing doctrines and the understanding of group members are played out against one another, and theoretical knowledge is placed side by side with the **Vician** 'knowing of the third kind' (cf. **Shotter** 1993) – for example, the knowledge of what it is like to be a woman, mother, or wife. In this way, **Crawford** et al. (1992) recently opened up a new discussion about memory in light of psychological and sociological theories of emotions and in light of an everyday understanding of emotions. This theoretical development emerged from working with MW, and involved a critical reading of the theories associated with it. Deconstructing these theories serves to render explicit the underlying assumptions of common theories, as well as the way in which individuals have come to understand themselves in these theories. MW makes the "latent" social and political processes visible.

MW is exciting when it facilitates change. Yet it can also galvanise, upset, and throw people and things off balance. The understanding arrived at "collectively" is not uniform. Meaning is necessarily diverse. For example, in the **Crawford**-group's work on "vacation"-memories, the understanding of "responsibility" in the group was contested. Memories of young girls who were proud to be given responsibility contrasted with those of grown women who felt it was a burden to be 'responsible' for making sure everyone enjoyed their holidays (1992, 143 et sq.). Similarly, Jessica **Benjamin** warns (1989) of the unavoidable entanglement of pleasure and pain, of autonomy and separation. Differences are not always dissolved; indeed, difference and conflict form the core of MW.

Collective MW 'has the advantage of combining the critique of ideology, language, everyday life, theory, society, and culture; its disadvantage lies in the fact that the research work itself requires an organising sociologist with a knowledge of structure and organisation, theory and ideology in as many fields as possible, that is to say, an expert who must at the same time appear as an equal in terms of experience' (**Haug** 1994, 655). This contradiction must be overcome. Differences in status within a group can inhibit the debate and the struggle for meaning. Nevertheless, the presence of an experienced scholar is necessary. For example, several female psychologists were present within the MW group that examined the construction of emotion with particular attention to

gender (**Crawford** et al. 1992). This group also set up (similar to **Stephenson**, who studied the "silence" of women) a male MW-group in order to be able to work comparatively.

Methods such as oral history, biographical research or narrative psychology also deal with texts in which the hidden processes of self-construction are articulated. But they do not rely on collective memory and collective methods of analysis. Perhaps with the exception of 'narrative psychology', not only is there less space for negotiating meaning, but the therapist who gathers the stories and the author of the case study retain control over the interpretation. Debates about the "living tradition" are likely to be limited, and intersubjectivity and discursive positioning are constrained by the therapist-patient relationship as much as by that between the interviewees. Maybe with the claim to 'narrative psychology' within them there is not only less room for negotiation of meaning, but the therapist that collected the stories and the author of the case study retains the control of the interpretation. Debates about the "lived traditions" should only take place to a limited degree, and intersubjectivity and discursive positioning are through the therapist-patient relationship more or equally restricted just as between the interviewees.

Many of the issues MW deals with were already discussed in the consciousness raising groups, in which women shared their experiences of subordination and oppression. The self-awareness groups gave women more support and power by creating a space which facilitated the articulation of their experience, and which allowed women to recognise their experiences in other women's stories. Beyond that, what MW's 'intervening analysis' (**Haug** 1994, 650) provides is a new, collective means of understanding. It enables women to reframe their lives and inspires others to do the same. MW situates understanding within the culture of change that is part of a social movement. As individuals, women may find it impossible to resist the forces that oppress them; collectively, they are infinitely more capable of changing their situation.

Due to the fact that MW is devoted to changing the practices that reproduce the oppression of women, it can be described as a culture that creates a "break with the past". While it fills in the gaps and ruptures within the remembered scenes, the group members come to break open the way memory is constructed, which allows them to reconsider their position in the social world in order to change it.

Connections – A number of researchers used and changed the method. Around the **Crawford** group, research was done on ageing, intimacy, shame and guilt, sons and mothers, menstruation, hetero- and homosexuality. Unu **Gault** led a series of workshops in Australia and New Zealand, which deal with

menopause as well as 'repulsive' feelings like envy and jealousy. Many of the participants in these workshops continued to use MW as a basis for seminars and courses, while others discussed the possibility of applying it in therapy. In the USA, **Schratz-Hadwich** (1995) used MW in courses on intercultural studies and in peace research. In almost all Northern European countries, there are MW groups in women's research institutions. For a time in Germany, MW became something like a movement, with some 40 groups from different cities cooperating with each other and coming together for annual meetings in the 1980s. Certainly, a part of the necessary language and theoretical work gets lost in the context of courses and seminars of this kind. Nevertheless, the expanded understanding of MW also attests to its usefulness for the women involved.

Susan Kippax
Translated by Vanessa Gravenor

Bibliography

H. **Bay**, 'Erzählpanzer: Überlegungen zu Ideologie und Erfahrung', H. Bay, C. Hamann (eds.), *Ideologie nach ihrem 'Ende': Gesellschaftskritik zwischen Marxismus und Postmoderne*, Opladen 1995, 17–41.

J. **Benjamin**, 'Herrschaft-Knechtschaft: Die Phantasie von der erotischen Unterwerfung', E. List, H. Studer (eds.), *Denkverhältnisse*, Frankfurt/M 1989, 511–38.

M. **Billig**, *Arguing and Thinking: A Rhetorical Approach to Social Psychology*, Cambridge 1987.

J. **Butler**, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, New York 1990.

J. **Crawford**, S. **Kippax**, J. **Onyx**, U. **Gault**, P. **Benton**, *Emotion and Gender: Constructing Meaning from Memory*, London 1992.

B. **Davies**, R. **Harre**, 'Positioning: The Discursive Production of Selves', *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, vol. 20, 1990, no. 1. 43–63.

E. **Grosz**, *Volatile Bodies: Towards a Corporeal Feminism*, Sydney 1990.

R. **Harre**, *Personal Being: A Theory for Individual Psychology*, Oxford 1983.

R. **Harre**, 'The Social Construction of Selves', K. Yardley, T. Honess (eds.), *Self and Identity*, Chichester 1986, 41 et sq.

F. **Haug** (ed.), *Sexualisierung der Körper*, AS 90, Berlin/W-Hamburg 1983, 3rd edn. 1992.

F. **Haug** (ed.), *Erziehung zur Weiblichkeit: Alltagsgeschichten und Entwurf einer Theorie weiblicher Sozialisation*, AS 45, Berlin/W-Hamburg 1980, 1991.

F. **Haug**, 'Alltagsforschung als zivilgesellschaftliches Projekt', *Argument*, vol. 26, 1994, no. 206, 639–57.

F. **Haug**, K. **Hauser** (eds.), *Subjekt Frau*, AS 117, Berlin/W-Hamburg 1988.

F. **Haug**, K. **Hauser** (eds.), *Der Widerspenstigen Lähmung*, AS 130, Berlin/W-Hamburg 1986.

F. **Haug**, K. **Hauser** (eds.), *Die andere Angst*, AS 184, Berlin-Hamburg 1991.

F. **Haug**, E. **Wollmann** (eds.), *Hat die Leistung ein Geschlecht?*, AS 219, Berlin-Hamburg 1993.

F. **Haug**, B. **Hipfl**, *Sündiger Genuß?*, AS 236, Berlin-Hamburg 1995.

J. **Henriques** et al., *Changing the Subject: Psychology, Social Regulation and Subjectivity*, London-New York 1984.

J. **Hodge**, 'Subject, Body and Exclusion of Women from Philosophy', M. Griffiths, M. Whitford (eds.), *Feminist Perspectives in Philosophy*, Bloomington 1988, 152–68.

S. **Kippax** et al., 'Women Negotiating Heterosex: Implications for AIDS Prevention', *Women's Studies International Forum*, vol. 13, 1990, no. 6, 553–42.

U. **LeGuin**, *Dancing at the Edge of the World*, London 1992.

G.H. **Mead**, 'Social Psychology as a Counterpart in Physiological Psychology', *Psychological Bulletin*, vol. 6, 1909, 401–8.

C.R. **Rogers**, *On Becoming a Person*, Boston 1961.

B. **Schratz-Hadwich**, 'Collective Memory-Work: The Self as a Re/Source for Re/Search', M. Schratz, R. Walker (eds.), *Research as Social Change*, London-New York 1995.

J. **Scott**, 'The Evidence of Experience', H. Abelove, M.A. Barale, D.M. Halperin (eds.), *The Lesbian and Gay Study Reader*, New York 1993.

J. **Shotter**, *Social Accountability and Selfhood*, Oxford 1984.

J. **Shotter**, 'A Sense of Place: Vico and the Social Production of Social Identities', *British Journal of Social Psychology*, vol. 25, 1986, 199–211.

J. **Shotter**, *Cultural Politics of Everyday Life: Social Constructionism, Rhetoric, and Knowing of the Third Kind*, Buckingham 1993.

L. **Stanley**, 'The Mother of Invention: Necessity, Writing, and Representation', *Feminism and Psychology*, vol. 6, 1996, no. 1, 45–51.

N. **Stephenson**, S. **Kippax**, J. **Crawford**, 'You and Me and She: Memory-Work and the construction of Self', S. Wilkinson (ed.), *Feminist Social Psychologies*, Milton Keynes 1997.

J. **Wertsch**, *Vygotsky and the Social Formation of Mind*, London 1985.

→ appropriation, coherence, critique, discourse analysis, empiricism/theory, everyday research, experience, female forms, female subordination, ideology, interventional social research, knowledge, language, material analysis, meaning, metaphor, method, phrases, remembrance, significance, situated knowledge, subject effect, subject–object, symptomatic reading, text

→ Alltagsforschung, Aneignung, Bedeutung, Diskursanalyse, eingreifende Sozialforschung, Empirie/Theorie, Erfahrung, Erinnerung, Frauenemanzipation, Frauenformen, Ideologiekritik, Kohärenz, Kritik, Materialanalyse, Metapher, Methode, Phrasen, Sinn, situiertes Wissen, Sprache, Subjekt-Effekt, Subjekt-Objekt, symptomale Lektüre, Text, Wissen

CHAPTER 32

Primary Valorisation

A: taḥwīl ʾilā qīma. – F: valorisation primaire. – G: Inwertsetzung. – R: pervonačalʾnaja valorizacija. – S: valorización primaria. – C: jiàzhíhuà 价值化

The term PV, which comes from resource economics (see for example **Gerold** 1982; **Schneider** 1983), has only found widespread use since the late 1980s, in connection with ecological issues and analyses of globalisation. It alludes to the transformation of commodities into money and to value and capital taking on a life of their own vis-à-vis the use value of commodities; moreover, it updates the analysis of the 'so-called primitive accumulation' dealt with in Part Eight of *C I* and relates Rosa **Luxemburg**'s considerations on the accumulation of capital to processes of capitalist globalisation and associated social structural changes. In this sense, the term is an important element of a Marxist-oriented diagnosis of the times.

1. PV is often used synonymously with related terms such as "commodification" or "monetisation" but must be distinguished from them: the term takes up the process of "becoming a commodity" analysed by **Marx** (cf. MECW 3/267 [MEW 40/506]; *C III*, 454 [MEW 25/348 et sq.]) in that it captures the associated subordination of objects to the laws of the form of value, and the specific social objectivity of the latter under capitalist conditions. The purpose of PV is thus not the use of particular material qualities, as is assumed, among others, by bourgeois resource economics, but rather solely their use in valorising value (in contrast to goods traded in non-capitalist markets). The monetary valuation of objects ("monetisation") is thus in itself not sufficient as a characterisation of PV, although it represents an aspect of this process. Whereas, for example, in the case of recreational and protected areas, it can express a subjective valuation, the analysis of PV aims at the actual incorporation of objects or social processes into the process of capital accumulation.

Moreover, PV refers directly to the 'so-called primitive accumulation' (*C I*, 871 [MEW 23/741] et sqq.), i.e. the emergence and imposition of capitalist relations of production, the divorcing of 'the producer from the means of production' and the transformation of the latter into capital (874 et sq. [742]). Because **Marx** describes this process of divorcing as 'primitive' in that 'it forms the prehistory of capital, and of the mode of production corresponding to capital'

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_033
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

(875 [ibid.]), it was sometimes assumed that this process had been completed with the imposition of the capitalist relations of production. In this context, Marx describes the process of releasing the modern wage labourer from feudal relations, the associated destruction of pre-capitalist relations of production and ownership (especially the enclosure of commons; 885 [752] et sqq.), and ultimately the genesis of the industrial capitalist. This imposition of capitalist relations of production is not to be understood using the principles of this social formation and the 'silent compulsion of economic relations' immanent to it; it is induced, rather, by '[d]irect extra-economic force' (899 [765]). The installation of the rule of capital required the state and its laws as well as direct military force. According to Marx, it is the conquest and exploitation of the natural resources of the 'New World', including the extermination of its native population, that represent 'the dawn of the era of capitalist production' (925 [787]; 915 [779]).

2. Both aspects of PV, the systematic as well as the historical, converge in Rosa **Luxemburg**'s theory of accumulation and imperialism. According to her, not only does capitalism emerge in a non-capitalist milieu, it also 'requires non-capitalist forms of production for its existence and further development' (*Accu*, CW 2, 265 [GW 5, 316]). Two forms of capital accumulation are thus to be distinguished in the historical process; one located in the economic process between capital and labour, and one 'between capital and noncapitalist forms of production', where 'violence, fraud, oppression, and plunder are displayed quite openly' (329 [397]). Luxemburg considers them as two sides of accumulation, bound up with each other through the conditions of the reproduction of capital. The PV of non-capitalist relations, including the associated violence, is thus an integral aspect of capitalist development.

This is taken up in the context of studies of the Fordist period of capitalist development. Burkart **Lutz** (1984) draws a parallel between the imperialist process of 'external land grabbing' and an increasing permeation of the social relations in the developed capitalist countries themselves, 'internal land grabbing'. Similarly, the regulation school of theory refers to a tendency towards a 'thorough capitalisation' of social relations (**Hirsch**/**Roth** 1986, 48 et sqq.), i.e. their subjugation to capitalist forms of production and reproduction (for example in the spheres of reproduction and consumption), with this form of PV being secured and monitored by a parallel process of thorough statification (i.e., becoming permeated by state structures). From the feminist side, the PV of the sphere of reproduction with regard to gender relations was addressed in speaking of women as 'the last colony' (**v. Werlhoff** et al. 1983), thus emphasising the interrelation between external and internal PV. Within capitalism,

'primitive accumulation' in the sense of PV is thus a 'trans-historical' process in shifting historical forms (**De Angelis** 2001; **Zarembka** 2002).

3. The tendency of the modern bourgeoisie to create 'a world after its own image' (*Manifesto*, MECW 6/488 [MEW 4/466]) is by no means concluded with the imposition of capitalist relations of production in the metropoles. It is precisely capitalist globalisation under neoliberal hegemony that has made it clear that the process of PV plays a central role in this. Contrary to the assumptions of bourgeois economics, PV does not simply mean the social utilisation of new spaces and resources, but rather their systematic integration under the 'inherent necessity of the world market' that bears the imprint of capitalism (cf. **Altvater** 1987 on the PV of the Amazon region). One facet of this process is the highly selective incorporation and exploitation of specific regions, a 'PV of space' (**Altvater**/**Mahnkopf** 1999, 23 and 128 et sqq.). Moreover, PV is a central element of 'peripheral regulation' (**Alnasseri** 2004), i.e. the subordination of non-capitalist modes of production under the dominant capitalist one. Furthermore, 'a PV of nature' takes place, which subsumes, for example, genetic resources under the 'general tendency to dominate nature' (**Brand**/**Görg** 2003, 46). This leads to a profound upheaval of the associated social relations, especially the 'replacement of women and other subsistence producers by TNCs' (**Mies**/**Shiva** 1993, 231). In turn, what is crucial is that PV does not aim solely at the commodity character of products, but refers to a multi-stage process in which resources are first defined or constituted as such, identified, extracted, and finally integrated into the world market (cf. the schema in **Altvater**/**Mahnkopf** 1999, 131). At each of these stages, the subordination to capitalist relations of production is associated with sometimes considerable conflicts.

On the one hand, capitalist and non-capitalist social relations (of nature) encounter each other here; on the other hand, ever new areas released from the capitalist nexus of valorisation (for example, forms of informal labour) are transformed and subordinated to the valorisation of capital. This includes massive interference with culturally anchored modes of life. The example of genetic resources shows that these struggles already begin with the identification (made possible only by the rise of biotechnology and genetic engineering) of hereditary traits of living organisms as potentially economically valuable resources. This discursive constitution – especially in the case of the 'commodification of the human body' in the form of 'information about' it (**Rose** 2001, 5, 29) – is greatly contested, since it devalues and undermines other forms of shaping social relations of nature in which nature is not understood as a resource for maximising profit. The transformation and destruction of

non-capitalist modes of production that accompanies capitalist expansion and the monopolisation of the disposal over resources in the hands of transnational corporations are criticised as 'biopiracy' (**Delgado Ramos** 2001). This is not solely 'a question of laws and rules' of profit distribution, but also a privatisation of hitherto public, collectively regulated common goods (**Ribeiro** 2002, 119). Moreover, if the '[d]irect extra-economic force' that **Marx** (*C I*, 899 [MEW 23/765]) spoke of plays a crucial role in these conflicts, PV at the global level requires political and legal framework conditions (in particular special property rights and patents) to accompany and secure it that also have to first be imposed and are highly contested (on the conflicts over genetic resources and patents, cf. **Brand**/**Görg** 2003). Commodification and monetisation are necessary accompanying phenomena where the commodity character of nature and its valorisation in units of money represent a necessary partial step towards PV. PV itself goes beyond this, in that it is only concluded with the constitution of the commodities for the capitalist world market and their subordination to the conditions of the valorisation of capital. The point is the specifically capitalist commodity character – genetic resources, for instance, have been traded as commodities in local markets for a long time (for example, in the form of seeds or traditional medicinal plants). It is only biotechnology and genetic engineering, in conjunction with global intellectual property rights, that make them the raw material for corporations that operate transnationally in the pharmaceutical and agricultural sectors, the "life sciences industries". Only thereby are they subordinated to the valorisation of capital in 'biocapitalism' (**Haug** 2001). To that extent, 'the PV of nature represents the structural framework' within which 'the conflicts over shaping social relations of nature take place' (**Görg** 2003, 297).

4. The process of PV poses problems with regard to its immanent economic limits as well as the relationship between violence and economics, science and technology, politics and culture: is an 'internal land grab' analogous to the Fordist PV of the reproductive sphere possible within the context of neoliberal globalisation? Can, on the basis of such PV, a new, stable regime of accumulation emerge both nationally and internationally (**Sablowski** 2003; **Harvey** 2003; **Candeias**/**Deppe** 2001)? PV is not a purely economic process; rather, it has political/legal as well as cultural implications and scientific/technical preconditions. The cultural acceptance of the unbridled exploitation of nature is no more automatically given than the possibility of patenting life forms. Rather, both are focal points of conflicts and resistance that must be decided politically and juridically, and only through them can the process of PV impose itself. The question of the significance of political/legal and cultural institu-

tions for the economic process is intensified under the conditions of capitalist globalisation: the preconditions for PV must now be secured transnationally, which is associated with a tendency towards the internationalisation of the state (**Hirsch** 2001; **Brand**/**Görg** 2003). Nevertheless, forms of direct violence are still necessary to impose and secure capitalist PV (cf. **Harvey** 2003). This applies to fossil resources as well as to those of biocapitalism. The war in Iraq is exemplary of the former, and the violent conflicts over the disposition over natural habitats, from the Amazon region to Chiapas, are exemplary of the latter. An adjacent problem is that of the re-articulation of spaces: local, national, and global spaces are brought into new, contradictory relations to each other by the PV of space, which brings about altered relations of violence and power. In light of advancing capitalist globalisation, the concept of PV is of central importance in order to better understand the associated conflicts.

Christoph Görg
Translated by Alexander Locascio

Bibliography

S. **Alnasseri**, *Periphere Regulation*, Münster 2004.

E. **Altvater**, *Sachzwang Weltmarkt*, Hamburg 1987.

E. **Altvater**, B. **Mahnkopf**, *Grenzen der Globalisierung: Ökonomie, Politik, Ökologie in der Weltgesellschaft*, Münster 1999.

U. **Brand**, C. **Görg**, *Postfordistische Naturverhältnisse*, Münster 2003.

M. **Candeias**, F. **Deppe**, *Ein neuer Kapitalismus*, Hamburg 2001.

M. **De Angelis**, 'Marx and Primitive Accumulation: The Continuous Character of Capital's "Enclosures"', *The Commoner*, vol. 1, 2001, no. 2, 1–22, http://www.thecommoner.org/02deangelis.pdf.

G.C. **Delgado Ramos**, 'Biopiraterie und geistiges Eigentum als Eckpfeiler technologischer Herrschaft: Das Beispiel Mexiko', *Argument* 242, vol. 43, 2001, no. 4/5, 481–94.

G. **Gerold**, *Agrarwirtschaftliche Inwertsetzung Südost-Siziliens*, Hanover 1982.

C. **Görg**, *Regulation der Naturverhältnisse*, Münster 2003.

D. **Harvey**, *The New Imperialism*, Oxford 2003.

W.F. **Haug**, 'Fragen einer Kritik des Biokapitalismus', *Argument* 242, vol. 43, 2001, no. 4/5, 449–65.

J. **Hirsch**, 'Die Internationalisierung des Staates', J. Hirsch, B. Jessop, N. Poulantzas, *Die Zukunft des Staates*, Hamburg 2001, 101–38.

J. **Hirsch**, R. **Roth**, *Das neue Gesicht des Kapitalismus*, Hamburg 1986.

B. **Lutz**, *Der kurze Traum immerwährender Prosperität*, Frankfurt/M-New York 1984.

M. **Mies**, V. **Shiva**, *Ecofeminism*, London 1993.
S. **Ribeiro**, 'Biopiraterie und geistiges Eigentum', C. Görg, U. Brand (eds.), *Mythen globalen Umweltmanagements*, Münster 2002, 118–36.
H. **Rose**, *The Commodification of Bioinformation: The Icelandic Health Sector Database*, London 2001.
T. **Sablowski**, 'Krisentendenzen der Kapitalakkumulation', *Argument* 251, vol. 45, 2003, no. 3, 438–52.
S. **Schneider**, *Der Südwesten der Elfenbeinküste, die Inwertsetzung eines tropischen Regenwaldgebietes im Spannungsfeld von ökonomischen und ökologischen Interessen*, Paderborn 1983.
C. **v. Werlhoff**, M. **Mies**, V. **Bennholdt-Thomsen**, *Frauen – die letzte Kolonie*, Reinbek 1983.
P. **Zarembka**, 'Primitive Accumulation in Marxism: Historical or Trans-historical Separation from Means of Production?', *The Commoner*, vol. 2, 2002, Debate, 1–9, http://www.thecommoner.org/debzarembka01.pdf.

→ accumulation, capitalist integration, commodification , commodity, conditions of reproduction, domestic labour debate, ecology, exchange value, exploitation, Fordism, form of value, formal/real subordination, gender relations, genetic engineering, globalisation, immaterial goods/immaterial damage, imperialism, informal economy, information rent, intellectual property rights, intensive/extensive accumulation, internationalisation of the state, law, law of value, mode of production, money, monopoly, nature, petty commodity production, primitive accumulation, privatisation, property, relations of production, resources, social relations of nature, space, use value, value, violence/power, world market

→ Akkumulation, Ausbeutung, Eigentum, Fordismus, formelle/reelle Subsumtion, Hausarbeitsdebatte, Gebrauchswert, Geld, Gentechnologie, Geschlechterverhältnisse, Gewalt, Globalisierung, immaterielle Güter/immaterieller Schaden, Imperialismus, Informationsrente, informelle Wirtschaft, intellektuelle Eigentumsrechte, intensive/extensive Akkumulation, Internationalisierung des Staates, kleine (einfache) Warenproduktion, Kommodifizierung, Monopol, Natur, Naturverhältnisse (gesellschaftliche), Ökologie, Privatisierung, Produktionsverhältnisse, Produktionsweise, Raum, Recht, Reproduktionsbedingungen, Ressourcen, Tauschwert, ursprüngliche Akkumulation, Ware, Weltmarkt, Wert, Wertform, Wertgesetz

CHAPTER 33

Putting-Out, Homeworking, Outwork / Telework

A: ʿamal fī-l-bait / ʿamal ʿan buʿd. – F: travail à domicile / télétravail. – G: Heimarbeit / Telearbeit. – R: nadomnaja rabota / telerabota. – S: trabajo en casa / teletrabajo. – C: jiātíng shǒugōng láodòng / yuǎnchéng bàngōng 家庭手工劳动 / 远程办公

The concept H – as distinct from labour as such – acquired its meaning in the context of the emerging factory system. Up until the development of separate specific workplaces, where groups of workers were supervised collectively, it was natural that nearly all types of work were carried out in buildings that were also homes. Before the Industrial Revolution, the "home" was very different from the modern conception of a private space for a nuclear family used only for activities without monetary gain. It comprised many different forms of social labour relations, including the use of slave labour, household servants, migrant workers, apprentices, and members of the wider family. It could be a mud hut covered with straw, a castle or even a palace with as many people living there as in a little village. Of course, there was also work performed outside the "home" – such as mining, construction, transport, and fishing. Nevertheless, it makes sense to view the development of the factory system as the beginning of a symbolic separation between a growing public sphere of paid labour and a private sphere with activities of reproduction and consumption. Since the 19th cent., this separation has become normalised and gendered in the advanced capitalist economies. The bourgeois household was the haven guarded by a "female angel" to which one returned from the fierce storms of the market; working-class men were expected to strive for a life path in which they could earn a "family wage" in order to be able to leave their wives to care for the home and the children, protected from the troubles of the outside world. The assumption in both cases was that the "breadwinner" of the household was male and spent his productive time outside the home, while the female sphere was inside. These norms were by no means universal. There was not only a large number of women, and until the 1840s also children, who worked outside the home in paid labour (cf. MECW 35/398 et sqq. [MEW 23/416 et sqq.]); there was also a considerable amount of paid production labour that was performed within the household under the system of "outsourcing", through which homebound workers were used as "supernumerary" workers, usually paid at piece rates for a variety of assembly, packaging, repair, and craft labour.

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_034
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

With the transnationalisation of production, H is expanding globally under capitalist conditions. At the same time, new forces of production such as computers and the internet are raising hopes among women for greater compatibility of waged and family work. The effects are contradictory. The isolated form of H often leads to the renewed disorganisation of the – mainly female – workers employed in it.

1. According to **Marx**, the compulsion to exploit labour power also 'usurped […] free labour at home' (MECW 35/398 [MEW 23/416]). The 'so-called domestic industries' have 'fallen as completely under capitalist exploitation as the factories themselves' (303 [316]). Despite the fact that certain industries, e.g. the textile industry, mainly employed homeworkers, these forms of labour were usually seen as remnants of the past destined to die out with industrial progress. Yet this 'modern so-called domestic industry has nothing, except the name, in common with the old-fashioned domestic industry […]. That old-fashioned industry has now been converted into an outside department of the factory […]. Besides the factory operatives […], whom it concentrates in large masses at one spot, and directly commands, capital also sets in motion, by means of invisible threads, another army; that of the workers in the domestic industries, who dwell in the large towns and are also scattered over the face of the country' (464 et sq. [485 et sq.]) – 'of the female sex exclusively' (471 [492]) almost.

'[S]uperintendence of labour becomes in great part superfluous' with the 'form of piece wages' (551 et sq. [576 et sq.]). 'The exploitation of the labourer by capital is here effected through the exploitation of the labourer by the labourer' (553 [577]). It becomes the labourer's personal interest 'to strain his labour power as intensely as possible' and 'to lengthen the working day, since with it his daily or weekly wages rise' (553 [577 et sq.]). In 19th-cent. England, this system was called the 'Sweating system' (553 [577]). It serves capital in augmenting absolute surplus value, and 'underpayment and overwork' are the 'systematic means' for doing so (696 [733]). In this system, the exploitation of 'cheap and immature labour power' is 'more shameless […] than in the factory proper' 'because the power of resistance in the labourers decreases with their dissemination' (465 [486]). Working conditions are bad, lacking 'space, light and ventilation', the emaciated bodies are 'subjected, in a most unconscionable way, to the influence of poisonous or injurious substances' and to heat and cold. '[E]mployment becomes more and more irregular; and, finally, […] in these […] last resorts of the masses made "redundant" by modern industry and agriculture, competition for work attains its maximum'. The capitalist mode of production 'shows its antagonistic and murderous side' (ibid.) in H.

The Factory Acts against the miserable conditions in the factory were pushed through after long struggles – '[b]ut when it comes to regulating the so-called "home-labour", it is immediately viewed as a direct attack on the *patria potestas*, on parental authority', which the legislature long shied away from. 'The force of facts, however, compelled it at last to acknowledge that modern industry, in overturning the economic foundation on which was based the traditional family, and the family labour corresponding to it, had also unloosened all traditional family ties' (491 et sq. [513]).

A series of memoranda about the extreme conditions in which the homeworkers worked were published in the late 19th cent. In the USA, Jacob **Riis**'s *How the Other Half Lives* shocked New Yorkers in 1890 with its portrayals of living and working conditions in the slums. In Great Britain, or rather the United Kingdom, an exhibition on the 'sweated industries' organised by the *Daily News* appalled the British nation. According to the *Women's Trade Union Review*, the exhibition left its visitors in no doubt that H is 'the main cause of "white slavery"' (cited in **Huws** 1996).

The answer progressives gave to the H scandals was to call for abolition or regulation. Most trade unions demanded its abolition since the 1880s. They saw H as labour that could not be organised and undermined their attempts to push through a family wage for the male factory workers. Regulations were adopted in Great Britain from 1901 for the making, cleaning, altering, ornamenting, and repairing of clothing and related work such as lace making; as well as for furniture making and upholstery; for electroplating; the pulling and processing of fur. These regulations prohibited 'unwholesome processes' and the use of infected factory buildings and premises and gave factory inspectors the right to enter the homeworkers' homes and force them to stop working. However, they were driven less by concern for the wellbeing of the homeworkers who were forced to endure these unsanitary and dangerous conditions, and more by fear that the products of such labour might carry infections into middle-class homes (**Bolton** 1975, 5).

In the time before the First World War, most industrialised countries passed some laws to protect homeworkers, many of which are still in force at the beginning of the 21st cent. In Great Britain, with the active involvement of suffragettes and socialist women, a 'National Anti-Sweating League' was established. Its lobbying contributed to the enactment of the Trade Boards Act of 1909. It succeeded in introducing a minimum wage and prescribing conditions for the workplaces known as 'sweated' – until the **Thatcher** government gradually abolished the trade inspectorate in the 1980s. It is remarkable that there was hardly any public discussion of H from the First World War until the 1970s. Despite some minor legal changes in the 1950s and 1960s (for example

the 'Heimarbeitsgesetz' passed in West Germany in 1951 and amended in 1974), almost complete silence prevailed on the issue.

2. Feminist debates during the 1960s and 1970s treated the "home" as a prison for women rather than a site of paid labour. Betty **Friedan**'s characterisation of the 'problem that has no name', with unscrupulous agitation, scandalised the 'home' as the 'comfortable concentration camp' (1963, 307). What was meant was that women (implicitly of the middle class) were being robbed of the fulfilment derived from paid labour because 'the very condition of being a housewife can create a sense of emptiness, non-existence, nothingness' (305). – Housework was studied in numerous works (**Oakley** 1974; **Comer** 1974), and fierce debates flared up over whether unpaid housework produced surplus value and whether feminists should advocate for 'wages for housework' (**Dalla Costa**/**James** 1972 and 1974) or for its nationalisation or socialisation, as socialist feminists have demanded since the Russian Revolution.

Studies concerning female employment during this period concentrated on issues of segregation of the labour market. There were also some empirical studies on the continuation of H in the female working class. In 1972, for example, Emily **Hope**, Mary **Kennedy**, Anne **de Winter** and others carried out a survey in North London in a district with a high proportion of immigrants. In 164 households they found 32 women who performed H, and they suspected that there were actually many more. 'It was quite common for a woman or man to claim that no one did H when the interviewer could see a row of identical dresses hanging in the background or had noticed that vans came and went from the house to deliver and collect work' (1976, 105, fn. 7). Marie **Brown**'s (1974) more extensive study (for the lobby group 'Low Pay Unit') found extremely low pay, long working hours, and health risks among the homeworkers in Great Britain and elicited the first public debate on the subject since the First World War.

Beginnings like this led to campaigns for occupational health and safety legislation for H; several organisations adopted them, often with active support from feminists. For instance, in the Netherlands it was the women's league 'FNV', in Australia the women workers of the textile union 'TCFUA' and in Great Britain national lobby groups such as the 'Low Pay Unit' and local grassroots projects against H, which were formed mostly in industrial cities on the model of the 'Leicester Outwork Campaign' launched in the 1970s. In 1984, they all merged under the umbrella of the 'NGH' (National Group on H). Over the course of the 1980s and 1990s, many of these groups united in a European network that established links with campaigns and organisations in developing countries (such as 'SEWA', an organisation of self-employed women in India, or

'PATAMABA', the national umbrella organisation of homeworkers of the Philippines) in order to found an international network in 1994, the Homenet (www.homenetww.org.uk) (cf. **Huws** 1995). Such networks served to develop practical initiatives such as the successful lobbying of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to adopt a convention on H in 1996 and the Clean Clothes Campaign (www.cleanclothes.org). Feminist campaigns to develop organisational forms and improve working conditions for low-wage homeworkers are complemented by feminist analyses of these forms of H. Some of the earliest research that focused on empirical studies of traditional forms of low-paid manual H was carried out by Sheila **Allen** and Diana **Leonard Barker** (1976 and **Allen** 1981), by the former and Carol **Wolkowitz** (1987) and by Laura and Robert **Johnson** (1982) and later continued e.g. by Sheila **Rowbotham** (1993) and Jane **Tate** (1995).

3. With the high-tech mode of production, the "factory" undergoes fragmentation across the entire globe; in various forms, from the *maquiladoras* to the transparent factory, from informal homeworkers of the Third World to the modern teleworkers, H returns to the centre of attention. **Gramsci** coined the term 'extended factory' (*PN* 3, N. 7, § 96, 221) for this without being able to anticipate the scope it would assume. The expansion of H fits with the trend towards global subcontracting, the outsourcing of subcontracts to other companies, and with employment relations becoming more informal. The decentralised production by suppliers, so-called "development partners", who in turn employ countless small sweatshops and homeworkers, blurs the 'lines of demarcation between the formal and informal sectors' (**Altvater**/**Mahnkopf** 1996, 306). 'The more decentralised and household-oriented the labour becomes, the lower the wages, the less controllable the working conditions, the less trade union organisation, the more use of child labour' (**Wichterich** 2000, 18). The supplier pyramids extend across several countries and combine various production methods for the most profitable use of the respective resources: for instance, Japanese companies take on research and development as well as final assembly, very complex components and modules are produced by suppliers in the same country, contracts for less complex modules are passed on to Taiwanese companies, who in turn subcontract to Vietnamese or Thai factories, who in turn use self-employed homeworkers. The expansion of H is by no means confined to the peripheries. For instance, Miami's textile industry is run by white male producers, 90% of whom have contracts with male Cuban subcontractors, whose *sweatshops* have 95% Cuban women working in them, often outsourced to H: 'Thus, new gender differences and hierarchies arise in the informal sector, which are particularly aggravated by class-specific as well as ethnic and national affiliations' (**Young** 1998, 187).

Marx saw the 'hierarchically organised system of exploitation and oppression' as characterised by the 'interposition of parasites between the capitalist and the wage labourer, the "subletting of labour"' (MECW 35/552 et sq. [MEW 23/577]). H is not directly subordinated to capital, but 'the merchant' or 'the usurer' (511 [533]) is guaranteed to put pressure on the domestic producers. 'The gain of these middlemen comes entirely from the difference between the labour price which the capitalist pays, and the part of that price which they actually allow to reach the labourer' (553 [577]). It is quite the same in transnational capitalism: the businesses do not directly employ homeworkers and children at very low wages. They award contracts to companies from the tricontinent which then subcontract to other "organisers" of the work, indeed "merchants", who acquire local domestic labour power, mainly of women and migrants. H also means 'atomisation and disorganisation of these hidden labourers' (**Mies** 1996, 138). The isolation at the location of the activities prevents 'an expansion of the capacity to act, as joint action is a condition for political change' (**Kreutz/Stäbler** 1998, 133). H and housework 'thus first of all always means acting under conditions imposed by others, i.e. a restricted capacity to act' (ibid.).

According to **Marx**, H can be found mainly in those branches of industry in which 'the technical basis for a combination of processes' is less developed (MECW 35/466 [MEW 23/486]). However, the lowering of wages 'by sheer abuse of the labour of women and children' encounters natural and social limits. When this point is reached, 'the hour has struck for the introduction of machinery, and for the thenceforth rapid conversion of the scattered domestic industries [...] into factory industries' (473 [494]) – a process which constantly repeats itself in 'a medley of transition forms' (475 [496]) and asynchronicities, such as in Southeast Asia in the early 21st cent. The dependency of those working in H decreases when they acquire their own means of production, such as a sewing machine. However, the inclusion of women in factory work, often under brutally exploitative conditions, can award them the status of 'family breadwinners' and (in countries like South Korea, Mexico, or China) lead to an inversion of the 'gender hierarchy' in the families (**Hennessy** 2000, 51).

With the development of information and communication technologies, new avenues have emerged for some lower-middle-class women in the course of transnational outsourcing of services like bookkeeping, accounting, customer records, and data processing. US companies, including many mail-order businesses, banks and insurance companies, airlines and even courts, use labour power from Jamaica and other Caribbean islands for this purpose. European and Japanese companies, and increasingly also city councils and government agencies, outsource their data processing, their software development

and maintenance within free trade zones to Turkey, Poland, Malaysia, China, the Philippines, or India. Eighty percent of this technically skilled yet labour-intensive office and screen work is performed by women, often in H, while highly skilled engineering is usually carried out by men (**Wichterich** 2000, 17).

4. Liberal feminists expected the computer and the internet to lead to improved possibilities of flexibly combining waged labour and "family life" – as housework, care work, and other (domestic) labour was called – through *Tele-H*. Here H appeared as a possibility of bringing the fulfilment whose disappearance **Friedan** had deplored. The proposal to transfer certain jobs (part-time office work in particular) to the home came up when 'the women's movement drove the delegitimisation of the possibility of housewife being a career fit for the unfolding of human potential [which coincided] with a renewed questioning of it coming from the development of capitalism' (HKWM 5, 1208). The challenge to the dominant gendered division of labour and the tendency for women to take up careers as a matter of course temporally coincided with structural unemployment and increased competition in the labour markets. Thus, it is not surprising that the idea of T for economically active women is charged with contradictory implications. Barabara **Gutek** (1983) sees in women's T the opportunity to free themselves from male control in the office and create new free space for independent creativity. Jan **Zimmerman** and Jaime **Horwitz** ironically object: 'Computers at home could allow women [...] to do not one, but two jobs in their cozy, rose-covered, picket-fenced, white frame, electronic bungalows' (1983).

It is also not surprising that pretty much all research on female T has been done by women, mostly from a feminist perspective. It was urgent to resolve whether T provides women with new opportunities or merely reinforces their subordinate status as housewives, and how new opportunities for action and restrictions on action articulate themselves contradictorily. The first research was carried out by Margarethe **Olson** (1981) for the USA, by Elsbeth **Monod** and Gérard **Métayer** (1982) for France, by Ursula **Huws** (1984) for Great Britain, by Gitte **Vedel** and Ewa **Gunnarsson** (1985) for Sweden and Denmark, by Merete **Lie** (1985) for Norway, by Paola **Manacorda** and Paola **Piva** (1985) for Italy, by Kathleen **Christensen** (1985) again for the USA, and by Monika **Goldmann** and Gudrun **Richter** (1987) for West Germany. A complex picture emerges overall. Segregation in the formal workplace is reflected at home to a great extent. The higher, specialised, technical and managerial jobs are often performed by men, with a small minority of women among them. This group is characterised by a strong bargaining position in the labour market because its qualifications are in high demand. This results in good working conditions and

relatively high incomes. These teleworkers usually have their own work studio, someone who takes care of their tranquillity and does their housework, and a job with enough diversity and social contacts to protect them from social isolation. An "intra-gender" division of labour is established within the H among the women themselves: highly qualified H relies on the support of women from poorer backgrounds, mostly migrants, for childcare and housekeeping. Thus, 'global care chains' (**Hochschild** 2001, 157) form.

At the other end of the spectrum of T one finds a mainly female group carrying out traditional women's labour such as data input, telephone services, or simple office tasks: low-paid and generally lower-skilled work. These women formally have the status of being self-employed and are paid for performance. Their monotonous H is associated with social isolation. This group has a great deal in common with the traditional H sector that performs activities like sewing, assembling, packing or addressing envelopes. A clear demarcation between H and T cannot be drawn here. There is a continuous spectrum from tasks that do not involve new technologies – such as preparing packages for shipment, organising documents, putting letters in envelopes, or typing with a mechanical or electronic typewriter – to new requirements like entering data, maintaining databases, or writing letters with a word processor. Women often perform both kinds of tasks. Between them lies an ambiguous group that shares features of both categories of T: female workers with relatively high qualifications who carry out specialised professional or technical work like editing, cataloguing, translating, proofreading, technical writing, and programming. Nevertheless, they must be distinguished from the first group (mainly male specialists), as their bargaining position is weakened by their care duties (to children or the elderly). These women often earn much less than local employees for the same tasks. They do not see teleworking as a preferred form of work, but as an alternative to having no gainful employment at all.

Much of this research shares a common theme: the difficulty of women's decision-making when they try to square the requirements of gainful employment with care duties. Sacrifices are necessary, whichever option they choose, whether to work part-time or full-time, to stop working or to work in H. Given the circumstances, T is often taken to be the best possible compromise. Thus, while it is inaccurate to see female teleworkers only as exploited victims who have not actively determined their living conditions, it is just as inaccurate to see them as completely free actors who choose this form of work as a way of life for the long term.

Annie **Phizacklea** and Carol **Wolkowitz** cover both traditional H and labour with new information technologies in their study published in 1995. They stress

the continuities between the two groups, much like Liz **Bisset** and Ursula **Huws** (1984), Kathleen **Christensen** (1985), and Monique **Haicault** (1993) did before them. They relate H to class, gender, and race. They reject Catherine **Hakim**'s (1991) explanation that low pay and isolation are accepted in H along the lines of 'grateful slaves'. As the research of the early 1980s had done, they stress that despite mostly voluntarily choosing H, the women are aware that their work is underpaid and undervalued, and they resent that their partners find their work insignificant. 'Although it may be true that no one forces women to do this kind of work in the way that the concept of "patriarchy" perhaps implies [...], women will continue to do it for their families not only because they have internalised these responsibilities but because there is no alternative given the persistence of segregated low-paid work and the high price of child-care and domestic services' (**Phizacklea**/**Wolkowitz** 1995, 30; cf. also **Gurstein** 2001). It follows that in order to do justice to the complexity of the decision in favour of H, structural factors must be taken into consideration, such as the reorganisation of the labour markets and the personal motivation of the individual teleworkers, who are heavily influenced by the social divisions of gender, race, and class.

The necessity of revealing the complex interaction of structure and agency applies not only to T, but to all circumstances in which the inequality of men and women in the labour market and their occupational segregation persist. The feminist agenda comes into view in the analysis of H: H is a meeting point and a point of antagonism between the public and private spheres, paid and unpaid labour, wage and family work, the power of the boss and the power of the husband, and of different "female forms".

The renewed expansion of H is associated with the partial dissolution of the factory as the place where the collective labourer is constituted. The new structures of companies not only allow hierarchies to be dismantled and teams to be formed, but also allow workforces to be fragmented into computer homeworkers who operate as independent one-person-companies, i.e. who are self-employed only in appearance and work without social security, over great distances and sometimes across continents. These new working conditions are found especially in the insurance industry (made up mostly of men), data processing, marketing, advertising, fashion, design and the computer industry. Owning a PC, the characteristic means of production in the high-tech mode of production, is the basis for the talk of 'employee entrepreneurs' (**Voss**/**Pongratz** 1998). The persistent allocation of reproductive labour to women leads to them being the ones who mostly enter into such labour relations, feel compelled to do so or actually see them as an opportunity to reconcile the different demands placed upon them.

The corresponding role model of the magazines is: 'Learn to do many things at once. For instance: drink a coffee with hubby, design a presentation and cuddle your child on your lap. Everything's possible, if only you want it' (*Eltern*, Special Issue 5, 1989/90, cited in **Ruf** 1990, 283 et sq.). 'Working without fixed hours [...] whenever there is free space [...] sounds great. [...] So she only leaves the house in the morning to take the kids to kindergarten and switches to the virtual world of the internet at half past eight' (*Brigitte*, no. 11, 2002, 162). Leave aside the psychological consequences of domestic isolation. Problems cannot be discussed with colleagues over lunch, there is no one to service the computer, and 'small children don't understand that Mommy is there but somehow isn't' (164). These contradictions are mentioned, but in the cheerful tone of being overcome by efficient women who have the requisite 'discipline' and organisational talent (ibid.). Whoever is not up to the task is prey to insidious self-doubt. The 'far-reaching hopes' based on information and communications technologies are grounded in an 'exaltation' of the development of the forces of production and a masking of the social conditions of production (**Haug** 2000, 773), including the conditions of reproduction.

H includes very different work practices, labour relations, and income levels and accordingly must be considered in a nuanced manner. In the case of qualified, high-tech and better-paid tasks, "liberating" aspects, scope for action and problems between wage and family work are interwoven in a contradictory way. H becomes a serious problem in the case of low-skilled, labour-intensive 'bad jobs'. For some workers, H facilitated via the internet provides for at least a partially improved combination of wage and family work and greater autonomy; their 'progressive' exploitation (cf. MECW 35/629 [MEW 23/664] et sqq.) permits the development of workers, sometimes even compelling it through forms of self-discipline and high technological demands. By contrast, the 'parasitical' exploitation (cf. 552 et sq. [577]) of data typists, seamstresses, etc., but above all of children, hardly leaves room for development; their work is consumed, their working conditions are bad, they work in isolation from others, they are often paid below the subsistence level, and are stuck in insecure and unprotected employment. The internet – as far as it is used – serves here purely as a medium for controlling the production processes.

Ursula Huws and Mario Candeias
Translated by Darren Roso

Bibliography

S. **Allen**, *Waged Labour in the Home: The Myth of the Separation of Home and Work for Women in Britain*, Paper f. Europ. Seminar on Strategies for Integration of Women into the Labour Market, Copenhagen 1981.

S. **Allen**, D.L. **Barker**, *Dependence and Exploitation in Work and Marriage*, London 1976.

S. **Allen**, C. **Wolkowitz**, *Homeworking: Myth and Realities*, Basingstoke 1987.

E. **Altvater**, B. **Mahnkopf**, *Grenzen der Globalisierung: Ökonomie, Ökologie und Politik in der Weltgesellschaft*, Münster 1996.

L. **Bisset**, U. **Huws**, *Sweated Labour: Homeworking in Britain Today*, London 1984.

B. **Bolton**, *An End to Homeworking?*, Fabian Society Pamphlet, London 1975.

M. **Brown**, *Sweated Labour: A Study of Homework*, Low Pay Pamphlet, no. 1, London 1974.

K.E. **Christensen**, *Impacts of Computer-mediated Home-based Work on Women and their Families*, New York 1985.

L. **Comer**, *Wedlocked Women*, Leeds 1974.

M. **Dalla Costa**, S. **James**, *The Power of Women and the Subversion of Community*, Bristol 1972 and 1974.

B. **Friedan**, *The Feminine Mystique*, New York 1963.

M. **Goldman**, G. **Richter**, 'Business Interests in Flexibility and the Origin of Home-based Teleworkplaces for Women', F. Gehrmann (ed.), *Neue Informations- und Kommunikationstechniken*, Frankfurt/M-New York 1987.

P. **Gurstein**, *Wired to the World, Chained to the Home: Telework in Daily Life*, Vancouver 2001.

B. **Gutek**, 'Women's Work in the Office of the Future', Zimmerman 1983, 159–68.

M. **Haicault**, 'Travail et travailleurs à domicile', *Le Travail Salarié à Domicile*, Nantes 1993, 45–53.

C. **Hakim**, 'Grateful Slaves and Self-made Women: Fact and Fantasy in Women's Work Orientations', *Europ. Sociological Review*, vol. 7, 1991, no. 2, 101–21.

F. **Haug**, 'Zukunft für Frauen? Einige Überlegungen zu Diskursen um Geschlechterverhältnisse im Internet', *Argument* 238, vol. 42, 2000, 765–76.

R. **Hennessy**, 'Frauengrenzen und Frauenwiderstand im Neoliberalismus', *Argument* 234, vol. 42, 2000, 49–56.

A.R. **Hochschild**, 'Global Care Chains and Emotional Surplus Value', W. Hutton, A. Giddens (eds.), *On the Edge: Living with Global Capitalism*, London 2000, 130–46.

E. **Hope**, M. **Kennedy**, A. **de Winter**, 'Homeworkers in North London', Allen/Barker 1976, 88–108.

U. **Huws**, *The New Homeworkers*, London 1984.

U. **Huws** (ed.), *Action Programmes for the Protection of Homeworkers: Ten Case Studies from Around the World*, Geneva 1995.

U. **Huws**, *No Sweat*, Trade Unions Congress, London 1996.
L. and R. **Johnson**, *The Seam Allowance: Industrial Home Sewing in Canada*, Toronto 1982.
M. **Kreutz**, E. **Stäbler**, 'Arbeit und Handlungsfähigkeit', F. Haug, K. Hauser (eds.), *Subjekt Frau*, Berlin/W-Hamburg 1988, 123–34.
M. **Lie**, *Is Remote Work the Way to the Good Life for Woman as Well as Man?*, Trondheim 1985.
P. **Manacorda**, P. **Piva**, *Terminale Donna: Il Movimento delle Donne di fronte al Lavoro Informatizzato*, Studi e Ricerche 46, Ediz. Lavoro, Rome 1985.
M. **Mies**, *Patriarchat und Kapital*, Zurich 1996.
E. **Monod**, G. **Métayer**, *Télétravail: Premier Bilan*, Paris 1982.
A. **Oakley**, *Housewife*, London 1974.
M. **Olson**, *Remote Office Work*, New York 1981.
A. **Phizacklea**, C. **Wolkowitz**, *Homeworking Women: Gender, Racism and Class at Work*, London 1995.
J.A. **Riis**, *How the Other Half Lives: Studies among the Tenements of New York* (1890), New York 1971.
S. **Rowbotham**, *Homeworkers Worldwide*, London 1993.
A. **Ruf**, *Frauenarbeit und Fordismus-Theorie*, Frankfurt/M 1990.
J. **Tate**, *Heimarbeit in der Europäischen Union*, Luxembourg 1995.
G. **Vedel**, E. **Gunnarsson**, *Just Pick up a Telephone! Remote Office Work in Sweden*, Copenhagen 1985.
G. **Voss**, H.J. **Pongratz**, 'Der Arbeitskraftunternehmer: Eine neue Grundform der Ware Arbeitskraft?', *KZfSS*, vol. 50, 1998, no. 1, 131–58.
C. **Wichterich**, 'Gender matters: Zur Vergeschlechtlichung von Arbeit auf globalisierten Märkten', Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung (ed.), *Globalisierung und Geschlecht*, Berlin 2000, 13–26.
B. **Young**, 'Genderregime und Staat in der globalen Netzwerkökonomie', *Prokla* 111, vol. 28, 1998, 175–98.
J. **Zimmerman**, J. **Horwitz**, 'Living Better Vicariously', J. Zimmerman (ed.), *The Technological Woman: Interfacing with Tomorrow*, New York 1983, 113–21.

→ child labour, collective labourer, conduct of life, decentralisation, division of labour, domestic mode of production, domestic-labour debate, double burden, doubt, exploitation, Export processing free zones/Industrial free zones, factory, factory legislation, family work/domestic labour/housework, female labour/women's labour, feminisation of labour, gender relations, high-technological mode of production, house, housewife, informal economy, international division of labour, internet, private/public, productive forces/relations

of production, relations of reproduction, reproductive work, solitude/loneliness, space, teleworking, unemployment, wage-form, women's forms, women's labour politics

→ Arbeitslosigkeit, Arbeitsteilung, Ausbeutung, Dezentralisierung, Doppelbelastung, Einsamkeit, Fabrik, Fabrikgesetzgebung, Familienarbeit/Hausarbeit, Feminisierung der Arbeit, Frauenarbeit, Frauenarbeitspolitik, Frauenformen, Freie Produktionszonen, Gesamtarbeiter, Geschlechterverhältnisse, Haus, Hausarbeitsdebatte, Hausfrau, häusliche Produktionsweise, hochtechnologische Produktionsweise, informelle Wirtschaft, internationale Arbeitsteilung, Internet, Kinderarbeit, Lebensführung, Lohnform, privat/öffentlich, Produktivkräfte/Produktionsverhältnisse, Raum, Reproduktionsarbeit, Reproduktionsverhältnisse, Telearbeit, Zweifel

CHAPTER 34

Remembrance

A: ḏikrā. – F: souvenir. – G: Erinnerung. – R: pamjat'. – S: recuerdo. – C: jìyì 记忆

R holds strategic value for any theory of liberation, as a collective historical consciousness, but also as individual capacity. To acquire a representation of possibility, of change, of resistance from the past, and thus to project oneself into the future – R operates within this register as a framework for liberation and in critical theory and literature. R becomes the gateway for ideological contamination and, at the same time, the prerequisite for ideology critique and intervention, a bearer of both hope and despair. R is the litmus test for the historical-critical project.

Although R has been a constant concern in the philosophy of history as well as epistemology and psychology, it is not a clearly defined concept, but often used as a synonym for 'memory'. Especially in the verb form 'to remember', in everyday language, R means to arbitrarily bring something to mind.

1. In the philosophical tradition, **Plato** places R, as a way to overcome forgetting (in Gk.: ἀνάμνησις), at the centre of his theory of ideas. At the same time, this means that R only refers to what is already known; learning is the re-R of what has been seen. This motif appears in many forms in the history of philosophy, and later also through psychology. Thus we read in **Descartes** that 'I do not seem to be learning anything new, but rather to be remembering something I knew before' (*Medit.*, V); and **Leibniz** states: 'nothing can be taught to us whose idea we do not already have in our mind' (*Discourse on Metaphysics*, § 26 et sq.).

Aristotle defines R in the sense of memory, first as an animalistic elementary faculty: 'By nature, animals are born possessed of perceptions (αἴσθησις). In some of them, R (μνήμη) does not come about from this, but in others it does come about. And because it does, they are more practically-wise and better at learning than those incapable of remembering'. In humans, R is the condition of experience, 'since many memories of the same thing finally bring about the capacity of one experience (ἐμπειρία). Indeed, experience seems pretty much similar to scientific knowledge and craft knowledge' (*Metaph*, 980a29–b22).

Kant defines R as 'memory with understanding': in examining the faculty of cognition, he urges us to see it as a kind of arbitrary depository, a container that 'grasps', 'reflects', 'holds' (*Anthrop*, § 34), and from which R is formed as a

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_035
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

conscious act. 'The faculty of deliberately visualising the past is the *faculty of memory*, and the faculty of visualising something as taking place in the future is the *faculty of foresight*'; enemies of R are '*forgetfulness*', but especially fantasy, which 'must not mix in with it, because then memory would be *unfaithful*' (ibid.). Hence Kant casually polemicises against women who read novels: 'This practice in the art of killing time and making oneself useless to the world, while later complaining about the brevity of life, is one of the most hostile attacks on memory, to say nothing of the mental disposition to fantasy that it produces' (ibid.).

In the *Phen*, **Hegel** interprets the activity of remembering as 're-collection' (VII.C). In this process, what matters to him is always the reference to the universal, to the community, to the 'ethical life of the national spirit' (VII.B.c), which is linguistically remembered. The singer of the epic, for example, is the bearer of such R: 'His pathos is not the stupefying power of nature but Mnemosyne, reflection and the inwardness that has come about, the recollection of the formerly immediate essence' (ibid.). From the perspective of 'absolute knowing', R becomes knowledge completely, the being of images disappears. In this way, R is the sublation of alienation. This allows the spirit to always start anew at higher stages. '*The goal*, absolute knowledge, or spirit that knows itself as spirit, has for its path the recollection of the spirits as they are within themselves and as they accomplish the organization of their realm. Their preservation, on the side of their free Being-there appearing in the form of contingency, is history, while on the side of their conceptually comprehended organization, it is the *science of appearing knowledge*; the two together, comprehended history, form the recollection and the cavalry of absolute spirit, the actuality, truth, and certainty of its throne, without which it would be lifeless solitude'. Thus, the *Phen* ends with positioning historical consciousness and R in a historical development of philosophy as science. Hegel energetically places R in the context of an activity and reworks the expression into a historical-philosophical concept. He is less interested in the question of memory, of retaining and forgetting, a question which later occupies psychology in the form of memory research, than in the fact that re-collection, as a concept opposed to mere externality or externalisation, becomes a mediator for teaching ethical life. In the position where for **Kant** and successors memory functions, **Hegel** sets intelligence. It is 'this nocturnal pit in which is stored a world of infinitely many images and representations' (*Enc III*, § 453), without being in consciousness, in virtual R. 'But intelligence as such is the free *existence* of the *being-in-itself* that recollects itself into itself in its development. Hence intelligence is to be conceived, on the other hand, as this unconscious pit, i.e. as the existing universal' (ibid.). The 'active R' (§ 448), the 'authentic recollection, as it is called, is the relation of

the image to an intuition, in fact the *subsumption* of the immediate individual intuition under what is universal in form, under the *representation* which is the same content' (§ 454).

2. The young **Marx** directs **Hegel**'s idea of historical consciousness towards the here and now, but initially remains in the enlightenment discourse on consciousness: 'It will then become evident that the world has long dreamed of possessing something of which it has only to be conscious in order to possess it in reality' (MECW 3/144 [MEW 1/346]). In contrast to such progressive R is the regressive one, which **Marx** finds, for instance, in the form of 'romantic, anti-industrial Rs' in economics (*Ms 44*, 316 [MEGA I.2/292]). Otherwise, Marx and **Engels** work in a historically reconstructive manner, precisely because for them it is a matter of people making their own history (*Utopian*, MECW 24/324 [MEW 19/226]; *AD*, MECW 25/270 [MEW 20/264]); however, they do not deal with R as a specific problematic.

3. **Lenin** emphasises the necessity of historical R: 'A worker who takes an anythingarian attitude towards the history of his own movement cannot be considered class-conscious' (CW 20/279). Actual discussion and work with R in Marxism begins with **Bloch**, **Benjamin**, **Marcuse**, et al. – Ernst **Bloch** expands on the Marxian idea of the dream possessed by humanity in his search for the 'Not-Yet-Conscious' or 'future in the past' that informs his *The Principle of Hope*. He writes his remarks on hope as a critique of the Platonic model of anamnesis of mere recognition in knowledge. His expressions are 'forward dawning' (*PH*, 114), and again and again the 'Not-Yet', 'the preconscious [...] in something coming up, is to be clarified', the 'psychology of the unconscious of the other side, of forward dawning' (116); 'the subject scents no musty cellar, but morning air' (116). **Hegel**'s images reappear, man is conceived as a 'receptacle full of future' (119). However, it is not R that opens up hope, gathers experiences and thus makes them accessible to knowledge. Rather, it is the opponent of hope. '[H]ope is not only the opposite concept to *anxiety*, but also, regardless of its emotional character, to R' (112). R wages a 'logical-static struggle against the Possible' (241 et sqq.). 'The block is the coastal trip, conditioned according to class, around the given, indeed the past, is the aversion of *static thinking* to the world-concept of active openness and blue' (242). **Bloch** thinks of R as petty, weak, and as an aversion to what is possible. What is important for us may perhaps not be remembered at all. We ourselves may not find ourselves in any useful area of R (*Geist der Utopie*, GA 3, 241). Since history is not ours, the 'work of transformation' must be based on hope, on the idea that was left half-fulfilled in history and is a 'continuing unfulfilled instruction' (GA 10, 166 et

sq.). 'Only now and then do features of the so to speak higher, human volition appear within this kind of remembering; only now and then does the darkness of the dream achieve an enfolding affinity to the mystery of the presentiment that speaks out of it, protected from the all too insolent light; certainly transmutations of what was appear now and then in memory, pointing to something expansive, utopian, essential, dispersed in the past, and so rescuing it' (*SU*, 189). R thus seems to him to be 'no power right for us' (ibid.). Instead, it is a matter of using dreams. The expression 'awaken', to put the dream on its feet, to realise it, becomes important. Thus, in the end, it is not R but wishing, the 'dream images' that are 'explosives' for a 'society without alienation, nature without a mere cycle of development and entropy' (GA 3, 169).

Elsewhere, **Bloch** formulates less rigorously R as the counterpart to anticipation, orienting it towards the utopian: 'Both R and anticipation emerge as acts of access that can be assigned to each other just as much as they are opposed in direction: the one, retentional, turns against devouring time [...] the other, the potential act, goes with the time of birth' (*PH*, 329 et sq.). 'R appears as a warning, hope as collective thinking; both are utopically united in relation to conscience, to knowledge, that which has been omitted, unconcerned, that which is to be a concern' (*Ontologie des Noch-Nicht-Seins*, 76).

Walter **Benjamin** holds on to the significance of the dream and the idea of awakening attached to it, but thinks of the relationship to conscious R as a work that has strategic importance for liberation. What is unconsciously present in the dream are elements of primal history, not merely as wishful images, but as buried R of a classless society (*Arcades*, 4). An instrument of conscious penetration, 'dialectical thinking is the organ of historical awakening. Every epoch, in fact, not only dreams the one to follow but, in dreaming, precipitates its awakening. It bears its end within itself and unfolds it [...] by cunning. [...] And this dialectical penetration and actualization of former contexts puts the truth of all present action to the test' (*Arcades*, 13, 392). The function of R thus becomes the foundation for present action. Elsewhere, R acquires the status of a kind of structure of meaning: 'the true measure of life is R. Looking back, it runs through life like lightning' (SelWr 2, 788). Benjamin takes as his task the problem of a R that finds little in the past worth preserving. 'The subject of historical knowledge is the struggling, oppressed class itself' (SelWr 4, 394). In this way, he binds R to liberation, and knowledge and the elaboration of what is to be remembered by the historian when he holds on to that 'irretrievable image of the past which threatens to disappear in any present that does not recognise itself as intended in that image' (SelWr 4, 391 et sq.). 'Whoever, like the Ancients, has seen his life transformed into writing, let him read this writing backward. Only in this way will he encounter himself, and only in this way – in full flight

from the present – will he be able to understand it' (SelWr 2, 788). This thought is prepared in Søren **Kierkegaard**: '*repetition* is a crucial expression for what "recollection" was to the Greeks. […] Repetition and recollection are the same movement, except in opposite directions, for what is recollected has been, is repeated backward, whereas genuine repetition is recollected forward' (W 6, 131).

Elsewhere, for **Benjamin**, awakening from the dream is 'a wholly unique experience of dialectic' (*Arcades*, 389). Benjamin places his reflections on R in the context of the developing commodity society, the industrialisation of production, consumption, sales and architecture, an era in which collective consciousness sinks into sleep and individual consciousness is increasingly withdrawn. The media promote increasing distraction by attempting 'to isolate events from the realm in which they could affect the experience of the reader' (SelWr 4, 315–16); the atrophy of experience occurs through a process of substitution: narrative is replaced by communication, communication by news and finally by sensations. The result is individuals who pathologically try to regain possession of the childhood worlds.

For **Benjamin**, Marcel **Proust** is at the same time an exemplary witness to the state of privacy of R, as well as to its processing and revelation. Proust distinguishes between voluntary R and involuntary memory, whereby the former is under the control of intelligence, and can also be censored by it. Involuntary memory, on the other hand, the source of creative fantasy, is removed from the formative will: 'And so it is with our own past. It is a labour in vain to attempt to recapture it: all the efforts of our intellect must prove futile. The past is hidden somewhere outside the realm […] Will it ultimately reach the clear surface of my consciousness, this R, this old, dead moment which the magnetism of an identical moment has travelled so far to importune, to disturb, to raise up out of the very depths of my being?' (*In Search* 1, 60)

Benjamin conceives this set of issues as a specific problem of socialisation in capitalism and involuntary memory as an inventory of the diversely isolated private person (SelWr 4, 316), as the product of a separation between active and contemplative life, which becomes accessible through memory and realises experiences in a synthetic way (315). The task of the liberation theorist becomes to analyse the conditions under which active experiences are no longer made that can be remembered as one's own history. This includes the distraction of mass culture, but also the exclusion of unskilled workers from any apprenticeship experience in wage labour, and the repetition and emptiness of gambling. Lacking a past, futility, not fully permissible – this leads to an existence as automatons that have lost their memory (330 et sqq.). Recapturing R, which includes all of the human senses (335), thus becomes the necessary

precondition for liberation as well as its goal. 'Of course only a redeemed mankind is granted the fullness of its past' and 'its past become citable in all its moments' (390). In his reflections on the philosophy of history, Benjamin contrasts the problem of R with the project of historicism in 'recognizing [the past] "the way it really was" '; he refers to R 'as it flashes up in a moment of danger. [...] The danger threatens both the content of the tradition and those who inherit it. For both, it is one and the same thing: the danger of becoming a tool of the ruling classes. Every age must strive anew to wrest tradition away from the conformism that is working to overpower it' (391).

Adorno is interested in the aspect of "self-forgetting", of the unconsciousness of oneself. This is a radical critique of a society that is so obscured by practices of exchange that no real experiences are made anymore (*NegDia*, 176). ' "All reification is forgetting", and criticism really means the same as R – that is, mobilising in phenomena that by which they have become, and thereby recognising the possibility that they might have become, and could therefore be, something different' (*IntroSoc*, 150). In this way, R is synonymous with memory work. For Adorno, undiminished experience as a component of R is only possible in art, whose experience he thinks of as the 'irruption of objectivity into subjective consciousness' (*AesT*, 245). 'Only when critique and R converge can tradition be preserved through its destruction without surrendering to domination the revolt of modern reason against tradition' (**Zamora** 1995, 442). **Adorno** and **Horkheimer** implicitly formulate the connection to **Bloch**: 'What is at stake is not conservation of the past but the fulfilment of past hopes' (*DE*, xvii).

Herbert **Marcuse** focuses on 'the restoration of *R* to its rights, as a vehicle of liberation' (*ErosCiv*, 232 et sq.). He places the accent on 'the universal in the particular' of R: 'in the personal events which reappear in the individual memory, the fears and aspirations of mankind assert themselves [...]. It is history which R preserves' (*ODMan*, 102). This is why, alluding to **Proust**, he can say: 'The *recherche du temps perdu* becomes the vehicle of future liberation' (*ErosCiv*, 19 et sq.). The 'ability to forget [...] without which civilised life would be unbearable [...] is also the mental faculty which sustains submissiveness and renunciation' (232 et sqq.). Against this connection, it is not only R that must be set as a liberating force, but R itself must first be freed from ideological conditioning. First, 'the one-sidedness of memory-training in civilization' should be made clear: Memory 'was chiefly directed toward remembering duties rather than pleasures; memory was linked with bad conscience, guilt, and sin. Unhappiness and the threat of punishment, not happiness and the promise of freedom, linger in memory' (ibid.).

Oskar **Negt** and Alexander **Kluge** treat the 'self-regulation of remembering and forgetting' as 'a confrontation of living labour with itself'; namely, they have

'historical reasons withdrawn into the unconscious, collectively and again, in a different manner, individually […] Self-regulated here means an order that takes place neither according to the laws of nature nor those of consciousness, nor solely according to the laws of the subconscious. It is a matter of unconscious order *because it is cooperative*' (1981, 60).

4. In *The Aesthetics of Resistance*, Peter **Weiss** elaborates the entanglement of R and forgetting with domination and submission. The end of fascism in Germany, after which people willingly strove towards a silence dictated from above, towards forgetting, brought about an intense work of consolidation on the possibility and necessity of R in literature. Weiss, Uwe **Johnson**, and Christa **Wolf** wrote great novels in the struggle for R. It is not so much the appropriation of R by ideological powers, but the general ability not to forget the past, nor despair because of it. It is about the appropriation of a history in which contrasting Rs make forgetting a compelling temptation. It is about the R of the violent history of Stalinism, which destroyed hopes for the socialist project, and R of the horrors of fascism in a hegemonic post-war culture of 'discreet silence' (**Lübbe**). For **Weiss**, it is also about the problem of finding a language for the task of narrating and not forgetting, a language spoken by a people that attempted to deny and conceal its own responsibility for participating. Writing becomes an attempted rescue against the silencing, the keeping quiet, even though silencing itself is perceived as a necessary processing of the horrors (cf. the mother in *AoR*, *Notizbücher* 2, 782). He does not want to retrace the history of the victors, but rather narratively gain R of oppression and resistance.

In the opening chapter of *AoR*, **Weiss** draws the figures of the defeated, the fallen and the exploited in the construction of the Pergamon Altar. This corresponds to Rosa **Luxemburg**'s view of 'the whole of human culture' as the 'work of the social interaction of many, […] of the masses'; for official history, 'happiness as well as the misery of peoples is the work of individual rulers or great men. In reality, it is the peoples, the nameless masses themselves, who create their destiny, their happiness and their misfortune'; in the pyramids, for example, slaves erected 'stone testimonies of their own enslavement' (GW 4, 206). **Brecht** also takes up this idea in *Questions of a Worker Who Reads*: 'Who built Thebes of the seven gates […] Did the kings haul up the lumps of rock?' (*CP*, 675 et sq.)

In the *Anniversaries*, Uwe **Johnson** distinguishes memory as storage from the function of R: 'what mattered most to her was one of its functions – memory, not the storage but the retrieval, the return to the past, the repetition of what was: being inside it once more, setting foot there again. There is no such thing' (2018, 53). Klaus **Briegleb**, taking the **Hegel**ian concept of the 'active R' for his analysis of the works of **Johnson** and **Weiss**, understands the former as

someone who writes about the dialectic of an attitude of resistance as a characteristic of an epoch and fails (1992, 205). **Johnson** ends up with writer's block.

Taking possession of R is not only a strenuous activity; it reveals entanglement, having been present, guilt. The question of the oppressed, the class and its remembered history is joined by that of the individual: R as an individual problem, especially also in the question of fascism. Christa **Wolf** writes *Patterns of Childhood* as a search for the traces that this time left on her. Like **Johnson**'s Gesine Cresspahl, **Wolf** is initially concerned with the difficulty of wanting to remember it all, of not succumbing to the hegemonic pattern of forgetting, whereby 'we would inexorably become strangers to ourselves': hence 'the work of memory [...] as a crab's walk, a painful backward motion, like falling into a time shaft at the bottom of which the child sits on a stone step, in all her innocence [...]. But you have a "worn-out original R to offer"' (1983, 11 et sq.). It is not merely R that is problematic to her in its selective, coalescing way; it already relocates the questionable instance to 'the unreliability of your memory, which works according to the island principle and whose mission is: Forget! Falsify!' (15) Memory is like a storage vessel. Conscious remembering, on the other hand, retrieves, as a process of consciousness, what the person has already engaged in: 'R of homesickness, mourning and regret. Taking an axe to the root. Emotions are not yet fused with words: in the future emotions will not be governed by spontaneity but – no use avoiding the word – by calculation' (275).

5. Both **Benjamin** and **Marcuse** refer to the work of Sigmund **Freud**. For him, 'our Rs – not excepting those which are most deeply stamped on our minds – are in themselves unconscious' (SE 5, 539). To work through R means to release the repressed from the will to forget. 'The R-trace of his [individual] early experience has been preserved in him, but in a special psychological condition. The individual may be said to have known it always, just as one knows about the repressed' (SE 23, 94). R becomes important in psychotherapy. The work of the therapist is to rework R into the conscious.

Freud entered into a discussion about memory and R, which developed only towards the end of the 19th cent. R was no longer of interest only as an art of retaining and reproducing something, but in connection with the exploration of the soul. According to **Hacking** (1995), the new memory sciences (neurology, experiments to study certain R contents, psychodynamics of memory) 'all emerged as surrogate sciences of the soul [...] that would provide new kinds of knowledge in terms of which to cure, help, and control the one aspect of human beings that had hitherto been outside science'; Hacking understands this access to the soul as a 'politicization of memory' within the framework

of a power struggle for knowledge (209). He traces in detail how R became an intense centre of discourse from 1960 onwards, with a peak in the 1980s, first in the USA, articulating a "social movement" that spread to countries culturally hegemonised by the USA, such as Canada, Germany, but also Australia, Scandinavia, and the Netherlands. Psychiatry and the media, in interaction with this movement, work on R as a stake for the analysis and diagnosis of identity disorders (dissociations, initially called "multiple personalities"), which are explained as late consequences of sexual abuse in childhood. By grossly simplifying the complexity of psychoanalytic treatment of R, it is assumed that at the basis of R, in the split "dual personalities", lies hidden the real history of cruelties, which, if revealed, should lead to healing. These almost epidemically spreading discourses and therapies testify to a quasi "Platonic" belief in the authentic R, which is to be recovered. What is lost sight of is that R is an effort to work coherently in a contradictory world.

In general, it can be said that in the 20th cent., memory research was further developed as if this apparatus operated independent of history, society and domination. Questions about short and long-term memory, of remembering as retention and, in the context of learning theories, rules and systems of memorisation became important. Particularly in relation to 'machine intelligence', the language in apparatuses of the psychic was also aligned with that of computers. Storage, operational programming and information retrieval give rise to laboratory experiments in which, for example, memorisation times of meaningless syllables are measured (cf. **Schmidt** ed. 1991).

6. In a completely different way, Aleksei N. **Leontiev**, representative of the cultural-historical school and in the context of learning and consciousness, deals with the ability to remember meaningless syllables in order to then discover the question of meaning and significance as constitutive of human memory as a 'higher form' (1973, 313). R now appears in the context of orientation and work, later as a dimension of personality development, but not as a processing of determinate historical socialisation.

Klaus **Holzkamp** also addresses not the question of R, but that of memory in the context of agency (1983, 381 et sqq.) and learning (1993, 120 et sqq., 134 et sqq.), and rejects the tendency to conceive of retention and forgetting as merely mechanical processes (122). Like **Leontiev**, **Holzkamp** turns to meaning and work. In discussion with **Freud**, he brings memory into the context of agency: 'This includes the analysable character of all those changes in the individual functional basis of agency, thus of "*memories*" as the real "bearer" of individual biographical continuity and contradictoriness, towards those features by means of which certain forms of described denial of reality, etc., determined in

each case, become (relatively) *enduring modes of the acting experience of the world and the self*, thus establishing themselves almost as "*dynamically unconscious*" *parts of the personality*' (1983, 381). In the book on *Learning* (1993), he ends the discussion of memory research with the proposal to replace the term 'memory' with that of 'retaining/remembering in foundational discourse' (139 et sqq., 269 et sq., 295 et sqq., 319 et sqq.). This turn of phrase connects learning processes with subjective determinations, but is hardly suitable for further reflection on the specificity of R in a historical-social context or on the connection between R and liberation.

7. In the *oral history* that emerged at the end of the 1970s, R became a central category. The guiding principle was: 'A democratic future requires a past in which not only the upper classes can be heard' (**Niethammer** 1980, 7). Interviews became sources and at the same time a research technique for its object, particularly the biographies of workers and oppressed people from the Third World. In most cases, this form of historiography was also understood as interventive social research. The aim was to build 'a bridge from the subjectivity of historical theory to the liberation of the subjects of history' (15).

For the "Third World", José Carlos **Mariátegui** worked on the importance of a consciousness of the past against the destruction of peoples by colonialism: the Indian 'has not broken with his past. His historical process is at a standstill, paralysed, however he has not lost his individuality because of this. […] The Indian has a social existence that preserves his customs, his understanding of life, his attitude to the universe' (*Seven Essays*, 345). Similarly, in the Zapatista uprising in Mexico, Subcomandante **Marcos** invokes R as a resource for resistance: 'We, the first inhabitants of these lands, the indigenous, were condemned to oblivion in a hidden corner, while the others began to grow big and strong, and we only had our history to defend ourselves, and we held on to it so as not to die' (1995, 71). The appeal to history is present in almost all his speeches. From another direction, that of studying culture, R also becomes significant for historiography. Jan **Assmann** emphasises the importance of R culture, with science as collective memory, in order to avoid breaks in tradition (1992, 299 et. sq.). The concept of 'collective memory', which has experienced a renaissance in the context of oral history, was originally developed by Maurice **Halbwachs**. For him, it refers to the arrangement of places, language, buildings, norms, customs and institutions in which individual R is formed. 'R is in very large measure a reconstruction of the past achieved with data borrowed from the present, a reconstruction prepared, furthermore, by reconstructions of earlier periods wherein past images had already been altered' (1980, 69 et sq.). For him, 'social milieu' becomes an important category for this continuous process, in

which not only collective memory is produced and transmitted, but also serves as a bridge to individual R. Incidentally, 'social milieu' is also situated, uncritically, at the point where the ideological, dominant culture and state apparatuses formatively interfere.

Gramsci's term 'cultural hegemony' is productively adopted in oral history. Rs try to adapt to respective cultural hegemonies in individual histories, to construct their bearers as coherent personalities in time, as well as to construct what is valid in it. The study of R becomes the study of its occupation by hegemonic culture. In the same context, Giangiacomo **Ortu** also refers to **Gramsci**'s philosophy of praxis, to his critique of a 'non-philosophical' consideration of folklore and for the demand to examine the subaltern classes' conception of the world and life for an integral historiography (1980, 124).

8. From the range of references to R in the conceptual horizon of sense perception, dreams, repression, fantasy, imagination, representation, visualisation of knowledge, familiarity, consciousness, thinking (cf. e.g. **Rusch** 1991, 268), the following emerges for a historical-critical project: R is essential for historical recognition, for the question of class consciousness, for resistance. As a dimension of conscious human existence, R is a battlefield: gateway to ideology, subject to hegemonic culture, but also a basis for change. At the same time, it is gendered and must be examined accordingly. For both the resistance of the oppressed and for individual agency, the work of R ("memory work") is needed.

Frigga Haug
Translated by Eric-John Russell

Bibliography

Th.W. **Adorno**, *Aesthetic Theory*, New York 1997.

Th.W. **Adorno**, *Introduction to Sociology*, Stanford (CA) 1993.

Th.W. **Adorno**, *Negative Dialectics*, New York 2007.

Th.W. **Adorno**, M. **Horkheimer**, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Stanford (CA) 2002.

J. **Assmann**, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen*, Munich 1992.

D. **Bertaux**, I. **Bertaux-Wiame**, 'Autobiographische Erinnerung und kollektives Gedächtnis', Niethammer 1980, 108–22.

E. **Bloch**, *Ontologie des Noch-Nicht-Seins: Philosophische Grundfragen* 1, Frankfurt/M 1961.

B. **Brecht**, 'Questions of a Worker Who Reads', *The Collected Poems of Bertolt Brecht*, New York 2018.

K. **Briegleb**, 'Widerstand als tätige Erinnerung', *Argument*, vol. 33, 1992, no. 2, 205–18.
H. **Eidam**, *Discrimen der Zeit: Zur Historiographie der Moderne bei Walter Benjamin*, Würzburg 1992.
I. **Hacking**, *Rewriting the Soul: Multiple Personality and the Sciences of Memory*, Princeton 1995.
M. **Halbwachs**, *Das Gedächtnis und seine sozialen Bedingungen* (1925), Berlin-Neuwied 1966.
M. **Halbwachs**, *The Collective Memory*, New York 1980.
K. **Holzkamp**, *Grundlegung der Psychologie*, Frankfurt/M 1983.
K. **Holzkamp**, *Lernen: Eine Grundlegung*, Frankfurt/M 1993.
U. **Johnson**, *Anniversaries: From a Year in the Life of Gesine Cresspahl*, New York 2018.
S. **Kierkegaard**, 'Repetition' [1843], *Fear and Trembling/Repetition*, Princeton (NJ) 1983.
A.N. **Leontjew** (= Leontiev), *Probleme der Entwicklung des Psychischen*, Frankfurt/M 1973.
Marcos, 'Die Zapatisten bringen Blumen und Freiheit', *Die Aktion*, 137/144, vol. 15, 1995.
H. **Marcuse**, *One-Dimensional Man*, New York 1991.
H. **Marcuse**, *Eros and Civilization*, Boston 1966.
O. **Negt**, A. **Kluge**, *Geschichte und Eigensinn*, Frankfurt/M 1981.
L. **Niethammer** (ed.), *Lebenserfahrung und kollektives Gedächtnis: Die Praxis der 'Oral History'*, Frankfurt/M 1980.
G. **Ortu**, 'Historische Subjektivität und revolutionäres Subjekt: Arbeit mit mündlichen Quellen in Italien', Niethammer (ed.) 1980.
M. **Proust**, *In Search of Lost Time*, New York 1992.
G. **Rusch**, 'Erinnerungen aus der Gegenwart', Schmidt (ed.) 1991, 267–92.
S. **Schmidt** (ed.), *Gedächtnis: Probleme und Perspektiven der interdisziplinären Gedächtnisforschung*, Frankfurt/M 1991.
P. **Weiss**, *The Aesthetics of Resistance* (*AoR*), 3 vols., transl. J. Neugroschel, Durham (NC) 2005.
P. **Weiss**, *Notizbücher 1971–1980*, Frankfurt/M 1981.
C. **Wolf**, *A Model Childhood*, London 1983.
J.A. **Zamora**, *Krise – Kritik – Erinnerung: Ein politisch-theologischer Versuch über das Denken Adornos im Horizont der Krise der Moderne*, Münster-Hamburg 1995.
J. **Zimmer**, *Die Kritik der Erinnerung: Metaphysik, Ontologie und geschichtliche Erkenntnis in der Philosophie Ernst Blochs*, Cologne 1993.

→ anticipation, consciousness, cultural-historical school, dialectical image, dialectics, disenchantment, distraction, empathy, everyday life research, experience, forgetting, historiography, hope, ideology, learning, liberation, mass cul-

ture, meaning, memory work, objectification, personality-theory, recognition, redemption, remembrance, sense, social research intervention, subalternity, thinking, utopia

→ Alltagsforschung, Antizipation, Bedeutung, Befreiung, Bewusstsein, Dialektik, dialektisches Bild, Denken, Einfühlung, Eingedenken, eingreifende Sozialforschung, Entäußerung, Enttäuschung, Erfahrung, Erinnerungsarbeit, Erkenntnis, Erlösung, Geschichtsschreibung, Hoffnung, Ideologie, kulturhistorische Schule, Lernen, Massenkultur, Persönlichkeitstheorie, Sinn, Subalternität, Utopie, Vergessen, Zerstreuung

CHAPTER 35

Social Formation

A: tašakkul iğtimāʿī. – F: formation sociale. – G: Gesellschaftsformation. – R: obščestvennaja formacija. – S: formación social. – C: shèhuì xíngtài 社会形态

In historical materialism, "SF" is a central category of the structure and development of human society. It serves to 'explain […] why and how societies change and transform themselves' by interlinking the 'existence of social structure and its historicity, or in other words its internal dynamic of change' (**Hobsbawm** 1968/1997a, 149). Yet **Marx** and **Engels** did not systematically develop the concept of SF, either as a basic concept of the theory of history, or as a societal model. The various definitions found throughout their works have evoked contradictory receptions within Western Marxism and ML respectively.

The concept is used by **Marx** in order to indicate the subdivision of the process of material reproduction of human society (MECW 29/263 et sq. [MEW 13/9]). Thus, we find an analogy in terms of content as well as a tension – in the historical concretisation concerning society as a whole – as regards the concept of mode of production. The concept covers that which is occasionally referred to as 'historical formations' (MECW 24/358; transl. corr. [MEW 19/386]). Without further specification, SF is used synonymously with 'form of society' (MECW 28/41, 195 [MEW 42/38, 188]), on the one hand, and 'totality' (37 [35]) on the other. Additionally, it refers to concrete social systems of distinct spatio-temporal extension. Finally, particularly in the work of **Engels**, the term is closely related to the base-superstructure dialectic (MECW 49/58 et sqq. [MEW 37/489 et sqq.]).

From a genealogical perspective, connected with the concept of "progress", the development and succession of SFS refers, in the first place, to progressive formation through continuing attempts to secure basic needs of existence (MECW 29/263 [MEW 13/9]). Second, in association with the theory of succession of formations – reaching beyond capitalism as the highest antagonistic form – it refers to the societal emancipation of the proletariat in communism (MECW 5/81 et sqq. [MEW 3/70 et sqq.]). At the same time, SF is the object of study of a science of history, as opposed to a speculative philosophy of history. In historical studies as regards the 'formative process', the term is related to an orientation toward subject and praxis (**Jaeck** 1988, 27 et sqq.).

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_036
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

1. The emergence of the **Marx**ian concept of SF was shaped by the consequences of the French Revolution and the emergence of industrial capitalism – in other words, the bourgeois-industrial 'double revolution' (**Kossok** 1989, 14). The development of bourgeois society and the emergence of the new social question of capital and labour changed social and historical perspectives (**Bock**/**Plöse** 1994, 13 et sqq.). Society, culture, and history, in their complex interrelations, were problematised from contradictory perspectives. Attempts to explain the structure and development of society were articulated within classical German philosophy (most notably in **Hegel**), English political economy and French revolutionary historiography (**Förster** 1982 and 1983), and in those notions of progress of the early socialists and communists that surpassed the framework of bourgeois society (**Grandjonc** 1989). The origins of positivism in Auguste **Comte** are proof of attempts within the bourgeoisie towards a justification of ideas of development connected with a scientistic social *analysis*.

Marx opposed previous models of social structure and development by taking as his point of departure, on the one hand, the practice of material production, human labour, and, on the other hand, the goal of overcoming bourgeois society. Instead of bourgeois society 'human society, or social humanity', ought to be the vantage point of a science aimed at practical intervention (*ThF*, MECW 5/5 [MEW 3/7]). From the mid-1840s onwards, Marx, together with **Engels**, posits the question of social perspectives as a problem of the contradictions of capitalist economy and its revolutionary overcoming by the proletariat.

The general hypothesis supporting this undertaking was formed by the notion – coherently developed for the first time in *GI* – that the foundations of human history were to be found in the individual activity of production and reproduction of the material conditions of existence and society (31 et sqq. [20 et sqq.]). This approach relates both to the active process of formation of society by humans, as well as to the pre-existing social forms that constituted its preconditions. Both of these meanings are implicit in the concept of "formation" common in the pertinent French literature. Thus, it is appropriate to speak of a draft of a 'theory of the historical forming process of society' (**Jaeck** 1978, 72).

2. Particularly in *GI*, in efforts to conceptualise SF, the term 'forms of intercourse' – or commerce – (MECW 5/54, 81 et sq.; cf. 32, 64 et sq. [MEW 3/36, 70 et sq.; cf. 21, 50 et sq.]) is repeatedly employed. Shortly after, **Marx** wrote that man does not freely 'choose *his productive forces* – upon which his whole history is based', but is rather 'circumscribed by the conditions [...] already acquired, by the form of society which exists before him' (to **Annenkov**, 28 December 1846; MECW 38/96 [MEW 4/548]). In order 'not to be deprived of the results

obtained or to forfeit the fruits of civilisation, man is compelled to change all his traditional social forms as soon as the mode of commerce ceases to correspond to the productive forces acquired' (97 [549]). In *Wage Labour*, he goes one step further: the 'social relations of production [...] are transformed, with the change and development of the material means of production, the productive forces. The relations of production in their totality constitute what are called the social relations, society, and, specifically, a society at a definite stage of historical development [...] with a peculiar, distinctive character' (MECW 9/212 [MEW 6/408]).

In the preparatory works for *Capital* and in *C 1*, "SF" obtains its methodological position in the economic theory of capitalism as well as in the analysis of its genesis and prehistory in preceding forms of society. This helps clarify the heuristic function of the term: **Marx**'s concern was, *firstly*, the forming of capitalism as a modern bourgeois mode of production in the succession and juxtaposition of its historical preconditions and the emergence of its own structures (*C 1*, 89 et sqq., 97 et sqq. [MEW 23/11 et sqq., 21 et sqq.]; *Intro 57*, MECW 28/23 et sqq. [MEW 42/21 et sqq.]); his concern was, *secondly*, critically determining its character as the last antagonistic formation which was bound to be followed by emancipation of society as a whole (29/264 [MEW 13/9]).

By examining capitalist development in Russia, the USA, and the European continent (in particular, Germany), as well as the global colonial expansion, from the 1860s onwards **Marx** and **Engels** expanded the empirical foundation for their theories of SF. In addition, a one-sided economistic theory of societal development could not meet the demand of the growing workers' movement for an orientation as regards a theory of practice. These two elements stimulated research on the 'interaction' of base and superstructure (MECW 49/35, 59 et sq. [MEW 37/463, 489 et sq.]; MECW 50/163 et sqq. [MEW 39/96 et sqq.]).

From the mid-1870s onwards, the ethnological and pre-historical studies of Johann J. **Bachofen**, Georg L. **von Maurer**, Maxim M. **Kovalevsky**, and especially Lewis H. **Morgan** (cf. *Formen*, XIII–XLVIII, 2–21), as well as their studies of the British and Dutch colonies (**Krader** 1972), provided a new foundation for **Marx**'s and **Engels**'s views on ancient communal system. Primitive human society is taken to be an autonomous stage of formation; the ancient societal forms of communal system were now considered to be the strata within later processes of formation. Similar to feudalism in Europe, in the colonial empires these societal forms constitute widespread initial and accompanying circumstances for expanding capitalism and its penetration of non-European societies and cultures. With India as his empirical referent, **Marx** had begun to study this process already in the late 1850s (MECW 12/125 et sqq. [MEW 9/127 et sqq.]). He also analysed late stages of primordial territorial communities that had

partly transitioned to private property arrangements as a possible foundation of power relations in antagonistic advanced civilisations, up until modern Russia. In this perspective, the "Asiatic mode of production" became a concept for the formation and structure of society as a whole (**Küttler** 1976; **Tökei** 1977; **Herrmann** 1999). This extended approach to the history of formations is expressed most clearly in **Marx**'s drafts of a letter replying to the Russian revolutionary Vera **Zasulich**. Here he comments on the future perspectives of Russian rural communities (MECW 24/346–71 [MEW 19/242 et sq., 384–406; MEGA I.25/219–42]).

These studies and deliberations furthered a diachronic and synchronic universalisation of the concept of SF. The study of primeval societies revealed the contemporaneity of the non-contemporaneous in all eras of formation, which had already become clear in the context of the various forms of the genesis of capitalism in Europe, America, Russia, and Japan. This concerns not only the development of formation leading from hominisation to civilisation, which is characterised as primordial society, or primary formation, based on gentile order and common ownership of the means of production. Rather, social forms of prehistoric communal life are also examined as strata of later processes of formation, either whose existence and stability, or whose disintegration influenced the structure of pre-capitalist antagonistic class societies (**Herrmann** 1999) and, with regard to the "periphery" – such as colonial India or the Obshchinas (village communities) in tsarist Russia – functioned as the starting conditions for globally expanding capitalism, too (**Eichhorn**/**Küttler** 1999).

In a synchronic and diachronic examination of the relationship between communal and private forms of appropriation that takes these elements into account, the Mediterranean-European succession of formations now appears to be a particular case of the more general process of formation, which is characteristic for the primary development toward capitalism and, consequently, for the preconditions of modern communism. Though **Marx** never synthesised these studies and conceptual designs, **Engels** pursued them further in *Origin*. His limited focus on the Mediterranean-occidental history of formation (MECW 26/131–33 [MEW 21/27–29]) was later in many instances interpreted one-sidedly (cf. **Herrmann**/**Köhn** 1988).

The treatment of capitalism as a transition to the "real" history of human society was supported by the new dimension of the history of formations that included the primeval societies as well as their later developments. **Marx** found that thereby his critique of private property of the means of production as well as his assumption that class-antagonistic civilisation was only a necessary transitional stage between original primitive communism and modern communism were confirmed.

3. The development and the usage of the concept of SF in **Marx**'s work reveals that its various respective dimensions entail distinct theoretical and heuristic-methodical functions. The finding in *Pref 59* that 'neither legal relations nor political forms could be comprehended whether by themselves or on the basis of a so-called general development of the human mind, but that on the contrary, they originate in the material conditions of life, the totality of which **Hegel**, following the example of the English and French thinkers of the eighteenth century, embraces within the term "civil society"; that the anatomy of this civil society, however, has to be sought in political economy', was decisive (MECW 29/262 [MEW 13/8]).

Accordingly, in *Capital*, **Marx** tasked himself to study, by the example of English industrial capitalism and its immediate socio-economic conditions, the 'natural laws of capitalist production' as 'tendencies winning their way through and working themselves out with iron necessity' (*C I*, 91 [MEW 23/12]). The prognosis of revolution in the *Manifesto* reappears in the analytical conclusion of the contradictions in fully developed capitalism as an economic-nomological hypothesis [*Gesetzesaussage*]: 'capitalist production begets, with the inexorability of a natural process, its own negation' (929 [791]).

In **Marx**'s analysis of the 'Method of Political Economy' (*Intro 57*, MECW 28/37 et sqq. [MEW 42/34 et sqq.]), a dimension of *complex social economics of bourgeois society* emerges, encompassing not only genuinely economic but also sociological and historical aspects. The economic laws of capitalism should be analysed in the constitutive sphere of production processes as well as in all their functional manifestations, i.e., of circulation (*C II*), distribution, and class structure (*C III*). Furthermore, there were plans to incorporate '[f]orms of the state and of consciousness in relation to relations of production and of commerce. Legal relations. Family relations' (MECW 28/45 [MEW 42/43]). In this context, the concept of formation refers transhistorically to the becoming, developing and progressive overcoming of a mode of production no longer based on land as the predominant means of production, but rather on free paid labour and capital formation, and thus market relations.

From a historical perspective, the emergence and development of bourgeois society is analysed as a gradual development of the commodity economy, starting from the numerous forms of small-scale production in the urban and rural areas, through manufacturing, and up to large-scale industry in Western and Central Europe (*C I*, 873–930 [MEW 23/741–91]; **Küttler** 1983). This overall process is taken to result in the dissolution of the immediate nexus between producers and means of production, stable communities and personal relations of dependence. In historical retrospect, this implies the differentiation and the contradistinction between the capitalist mode of production and the '[f]orms preceding capitalist production' (MECW 28/399–439 [MEW 42/383–421]).

Foreshortening, **Marx** considers capitalism to be both the highest stage of development and the start of the dissolution of SFs based on private property. In the formation process of capital, small private property is destroyed first. Later, through increasing concentration, large private property is in turn disrupted. Its limit of development is the contradiction between private appropriation of socially produced wealth and advancing socialisation of the forces of production (*C I*, 927 et sqq. [MEW 23/789 et sqq.]).

The concept of SF serves both as a concept to bring analysis of economy together with the latter's impact on all other spheres of life in bourgeois society, and as a conceptual framework for the methodological grounding of this procedure in a more general conception of history and society. To this end, in clarifying his methodology (MECW 28/17–45 [MEW 42/19–42]; MECW 29/261–65 [MEW 13/7–11]), **Marx** referred back to the historical-materialist concept of development and structure outlined in *GI*. At the same time, with reference to the *Manifesto*, he explains the connection with the revolutionary and transformative perspective of communism (*C I*, 930 [MEW 23/791]). In this holistic historical dimension, the historical process of the formation of human society can be structurally explained by beginning from the respective material conditions of production and reproduction – that is, the mode of production that 'conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life' (MECW 29/263 [MEW 13/8 et sq.]) – and their corresponding relations of production and class. Societal transformations are the result of emerging contradictions between the development of forces of production and the prevalent relations of production. They are 'era[s] of social revolution' (264 [9]), in which class struggle constitutes the decisive mediation between the processes of base and superstructure. An explicit correlation of the class concept to that of "SF" was merely hinted at (*C III*, 1025 et sq. [MEW 25/892 et sq.]).

Finally, historical progress is linked to the maturation of the economic possibilities and contradictions of every SF. Mankind 'thus inevitably sets itself only such tasks as it is able to solve', and which only arise 'when the material conditions for their solution are already present or at least in the course of formation' (MECW 29/263; transl. corr. [MEW 13/9]). The often-cited and controversial phrase: 'In broad outline, the Asiatic, ancient, feudal and modern bourgeois modes of production may be designated as epochs marking progress in the economic development of the SF' (263; transl. corr. [9]; in 1849 without reference to 'Asiatic' form, MECW 9/212 [MEW 6/408]), provides a rough historical sketch of the course of this development in light of the familiar eras of Mediterranean-occidental history. The phrases 'epochs marking progress in the economic development of the SF', or 'era[s] of social revolution' should capture the critical innovative shifts, not the entire history of formation. The 'mod-

ern' bourgeois mode of production constitutes the last 'antagonistic form' in the sense that it contains contradictions between economic and social classes, and yet these very 'productive forces developing within bourgeois society create also the material conditions for a solution of this antagonism' whereby 'the prehistory of human society' comes to an end (MECW 29/263 et sq. [MEW 13/9]).

Overall, **Marx** kept his approach essentially open for the critical inclusion of further developments of capitalist relations, new insights regarding non-European societies and earlier epochs, as well as for the incorporation of anthropological and natural scientific elements. His intention was not to develop a universal scheme of a particular sequence of formations, or a generally applicable structural model of the concrete developments of capitalism. He warns against the desire to use his theory as an 'all-purpose formula' (MECW 24/201 [MEW 19/112]), rather than a guiding principle for the discovery of particular concrete-historical developments. With regard to the concept of "SF", Marx never retracted the careful heuristic expression in *GI*, which claimed that theoretical guiding concepts can never be more than a 'summing up of the most general results, abstractions which arise from the observation of the historical development of men' (MECW 5/37 [MEW 3/27]). At most, by means of facilitating 'the arrangement of historical material' they can serve to prepare the 'study of the actual life-process and the activity of the individuals of each epoch' (ibid.). The SF concept's application as regards a theory of practice was established in chronicling works such as *Class Struggles*, *18.B*, and *Civil War* (cf. **Engelberg** 1980; **Jaeck** 1985 and 1988).

Concerning the concrete applicability of the concept of SF, a distinction arises between its theoretical-systematic (economic) and historic dimension (as regards society as a whole) (**Bollhagen** 1966). In **Marx**, the former amounts to statements of economic law. As was proposed in the *Intro 57*, the 'anatomy' of bourgeois society is the key to gaining 'insight into the structure and the relations of production of all previous forms of society the ruins and components of which were used in the creation of bourgeois society' (MECW 28/42 [MEW 42/39]). This, however, is not related to historical concretisation, because otherwise all 'historical differences' would be erased and one would 'see in all forms of society the bourgeois form' (ibid.). In this sense, the *CPE* does not represent a real-type, but rather a *theoretical model*, the validity of which as regards the developments in different countries is tied to the existence of necessary initial conditions.

With regard to the capitalisation of Russian agriculture – which was shaped by the village communities – **Marx** makes clear that, instead of the Western-European '*transformation of one form of private property into another form of private property*' (MECW 24/346 [MEW 19/243]), this is a case of a transform-

ation of '*communal property* [...] *into private property*' (371 [401]). In further developing his treatises on pre-capitalist forms in the *Gr*, Marx generalises these insights, creating the concept of large developmental sequences of forms of society based on communal property (primary) or private property (secondary) (**Küttler** 1978b, 254–92). Making a deliberate analogy to the geological concept of formation (MECW 24/358 [MEW 19/386]), **Marx** remarks: 'The archaic or primary formation' contains 'a series of layers of differing ages, one superimposed on the other' (363 [398]). It reveals to us 'a series of different types, marking progressive epochs' (ibid.). In the West, on the other hand, 'the death of communal property and the birth of capitalist production are separated from one another by an immense interval embracing a whole series of successive economic revolutions and evolutions, of which capitalist production is merely the most recent' (361 [397]). This 'secondary formation, of course, includes the series of societies resting on slavery and serfdom' (367 [404]). Capitalism, belonging to and standing at the end of this series of formations as a form of exploitation and private property, with its dualism of private appropriation and socialisation of the productive forces, is just as transitional in character as the Russian village community with its still communal land ownership and already private ownership of houses, farms, livestock and equipment (366 et sq. [403 et sq.]; additionally, **Küttler** 1976; **Eichhorn**/**Küttler** 1999).

Overall, two notions of "progress" rooted in **Marx**'s theorisations of formation are revealed here, in their correlation and contradiction: on the one hand, these theorisations are based on a theory of class and revolution in light of an unambiguous result of power struggle by means of revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. On the other hand, "progress" in the broader sense is largely synonymous with the by no means linearly progressing historical process of the advancing securing of civilisational-societal existence of humanity on the basis of the achieved conditions of production and reproduction and their higher development. This does not exclude the possibility of setbacks through stagnation or even in revolutions, but points toward the general developmental tendency of the process of formation.

In an overview of the various developmental stages from *GI* to the draft letters to **Zasulich** (1881), three dimensions of the history of formations and the structures of formation can be recognised: *first*, as a complete process of production and reproduction, as formation of society; *second*, as an 'anatomy of [...] civil society' (MECW 29/262 [MEW 13/8]), i.e., an integral economic system, concerning society as a whole, of developed industrial capitalism (with a contested analogy for the preceding forms of society); *third*, as a series of development in diachrony and synchrony of the distinct layers and forms of societies based on communal property and private property respectively (**Küttler** 1978c).

Additionally, there is the inclusion of '*determinateness by nature*; subjectively and objectively. Tribes, races, etc.' (*Intro 57*, MECW 28/46 [MEW 42/44]), and, thus, also family and gender relations (*Origin*). This aspect appears in the context of the analysis of formations foremost as a description of the destructive consequences and developmental limits of capitalism (**Tjaden** 1990b).

4. The **Marx**ian concept of understanding history as a progressive development of economic SFs, and accordingly analysing specific societies in their development and structure, was received conflictingly. A more indirect strand of interpretation began with the partial, and largely critical reference to Marx's original ideas in the development of the historical and social sciences since the last third of the 19th cent. (**Hobsbawm** 1972/1997b; Hobsbawm 1984/1997c). However novel the linkage of history and materialism in particular within this approach may have been, the trends of scientific development contained considerable heuristic elements (**Jaeck** 1988, 11 et sq.) that provided **Marx**'s approach with innovative impulses of lasting effect (**Tjaden** 1990a, 348 et sq.), especially with regard to methods for the analysis of the socio-economic structure and historical formation of concrete societies (**Iggers** 1994, 63 et sqq.).

Within the workers' movement, the concept of SF served both as theory and worldview (**Florath** 1999). In the Marxism of the Second International, the systematisation of the formation approach was predominantly directed toward modern processes of transformation and revolution. **Lenin** took *Pref 59* as the basis for an attempt at systemisation that emphasised the integral restructuring of society by the dominant relations of production (*FP*, CW 1/138–42; *Karl Marx*, CW 21/55–57). In this, he saw the systematic and historical function of the concept as the 'basic idea that the development of the social-economic formations is a process of natural history' (*FP*, CW 1/137 et sq.). Further, he claimed that 'it goes without saying that without such a view there can be no social science' (141). The one-sidedness of this and other interpretations was partly due to the unfamiliarity with key texts, such as *GI* and *Gr*, some late excerpts and the letters to **Zasulich.** That being said, **Lenin**'s accentuation of the dominant relations of production as the basic structure of society, and his emphasis on the coerciveness of systemic relations, was directed at showing the capitalist character of Russia, in spite of the presence of some under-developed elements, and thus at demonstrating its readiness for proletarian revolution (**Küttler** 1978a).

Stalin's canonisation of Leninism restricted the projected course of world-history to the development and implementation of socialism in one country. The interpretation of the concept of SF after the 20th Congress of the CPSU (1956) was also closely related to the development of a theory of formation founded upon the **Lenin**ian system conception of SF. The historical-materialist

perspective on history and society focused on one aspect only – the transition to socialism in the era of coexistence with the capitalist world system (**Kelle**/**Kowalson** 1975; 1981). At the same time, the concept of "SF" increasingly served as the heuristic foundation for the science of history and sociology (**Bollhagen** 1966).

In Western Marxism, SF was predominantly discussed in relation to other basic concepts. Parallels and commonalities with the debate in the East were demonstrated in the discussions concerning the transition from feudalism to capitalism and the nature of pre-capitalist (traditional, agrarian) societies. Moreover, the term was discussed as regards its historical-methodological application as well as the historically structural features (cf. **Küttler**/**Lambrecht** 1978).

In a general sense concerning philosophy and social theory, the concept of formation was predominantly a component theme in debates regarding the **Marx**ian theory of class and revolution, as well as the relation between modes of production and structures of society as a whole – in this context, above all regarding base and superstructure. There were conceptions of a coordination of mode of production and SF in a multi-structural complex notion of society such as, for example, in **Althusser** (*FM*; cf. **Wolpe** 1980); or conceptions of the subordination of societal formations under the determination and differentiation of modes of production, as well as its inverse, the constricted designation of modes of production in immediate relation to societal formations and their uneven character, for example, in the process of bourgeois revolution (**Poulantzas** 1973).

In the 1980s, the discussion concerning formation in the Western Left sidelined. However, the socio-economic and cultural transformations following the collapse of state socialism called for holistic socio- and historico-theoretical concepts (**Hobsbawm** et al. 1999). The challenges of high tech-capitalism and globalisation make it necessary to comprehend changes in the mode of production (**Haug** 2001). Given the social, economic, ecological, and total-cultural complexity and advancing differentiation of processes of disruptive change since the last third of the 20th cent., an examination of **Marx**'s approach to understanding history as the development of SFs appears particularly important, since a theory of formation that will be able to comprehend these events and transformations is yet to be developed (**Eichhorn**/**Küttler** 1999).

Wolfgang Küttler
Translated by Andreas Bolz, revised by Phillip Becher

Bibliography

H. **Bock**, R. **Plöse**, 'Vorrede', *Aufbruch in die Bürgerwelt: Lebensbilder aus Vormärz und Biedermeier*, ed. H. Bock, R. Plöse, Münster 1994, 13–16.

P. **Bollhagen**, *Soziologie und Geschichte*, Berlin/GDR 1966.

W. **Eichhorn**, W. **Küttler**, 'Geschichte in möglichen Perspektiven denken: Formationsentwicklung im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert', *Sitzungsberichte der Leibniz-Sozietät*, 1999, no. 7, 7–52.

E. **Engelberg**, *Theorie, Empirie und Methode in der Geschichtswissenschaft*, Berlin/GDR 1980.

B. **Florath**, 'Historiographie der Arbeiterbewegung: Eine europäische Subkultur und ihre Geschichtswissenschaft', *Das lange 19. Jahrhundert: Personen – Ereignisse – Ideen – Umwälzungen: Ernst Engelberg zum 90. Geburtstag*, vol. 2, ed. W. Küttler, Berlin 1999, 213–62.

W. **Förster** (ed.), *Studien zur Vorgeschichte des historischen Materialismus I: Bürgerliche Revolution und Sozialtheorie*, Berlin/GDR 1982.

W. **Förster** (ed.), *Studien zur Vorgeschichte des historischen Materialismus II: Gesellschaftslehren der klassischen bürgerlichen deutschen Philosophie*, Berlin/GDR 1983.

J. **Grandjonc**, *Communisme – Kommunismus – Communism: Origine et développement international de la terminologie communautaire prémarxiste des utopistes aux néo-babouvistes 1785–1842*, 2 vols., *Schriften aus dem Karl-Marx-Haus*, vol. 39, no. 1–2, Trier 1989.

W.F. **Haug**, 'Die Produktionsweise denken', *Flexibler Kapitalismus: Analysen – Kritik – Politische Praxis: Frank Deppe zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. H.-J. Bieling et al., Hamburg 2001, 36–53.

J. **Herrmann**, 'Vorkapitalistische Gesellschaftsformationen und historische Epochen', *Sitzungsberichte der Leibniz-Sozietät*, 1999, no. 7, 73–92.

J. **Herrmann**, J. **Köhn** (eds.), *Familie, Staat und Gesellschaftsformation: Grundprobleme vorkapitalistischer Epochen einhundert Jahre nach Friedrich Engels' Werk "Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigentums und des Staates"*, Berlin/GDR 1988.

E. **Hobsbawm**, 'What Do Historians Owe to Karl Marx?' (1968), *On History*, New York 1997a, 141–56.

E. **Hobsbawm**, 'From Social History to the History of Society' (1972), *On History*, New York 1997b, 71–93.

E. **Hobsbawm**, 'Marx and History' (1984), *On History*, New York 1997c, 157–70.

E. **Hobsbawm** et al., *Das Manifest heute – 150 Jahre Kapitalismuskritik*, Hamburg 1999.

G.G. **Iggers**, *Geschichtswissenschaft im 20. Jahrhundert: Ein kritischer Überblick im internationalen Zusammenhang*, Göttingen 1994.

H.-P. **Jaeck**, 'Die materialistische Erklärung des gesellschaftlichen Formationsprozesses: Zur Entstehung des Kategoriensystems der dialektisch-materialistischen

Geschichtsauffassung von Karl Marx und Friedrich Engels', *Formationstheorie und Geschichte: Studien zur historischen Analyse ökonomischer Gesellschaftsformationen im Werk von Marx, Engels und Lenin*, ed. E. Engelberg, W. Küttler, Berlin/GDR 1978, 19–90.

H.-P. **Jaeck**, 'Geschichtswissenschaftliche Erklärungen, Erklärungsprobleme und die Marxsche Theorie der historischen Formierung der Gesellschaft', *Gesellschaftstheorie und geschichtswissenschaftliche Erklärung*, ed. W. Küttler, Berlin/GDR 1985, 237–88.

H.-P. **Jaeck**, *Genesis und Notwendigkeit: Studien zur Marxschen Methodik der historischen Erklärung (1845/46 bis 1859)*, Berlin/GDR 1988.

W. **Kelle**, M. **Kowalson**, *Der historische Materialismus: Abriss der marxistischen Gesellschaftstheorie*, Berlin/GDR 1975.

W. **Kelle**, M. **Kowalson**, *Theorie und Geschichte*, Berlin/GDR 1981.

M. **Kossok**, *1789 und die neuen Alternativen gesellschaftlicher Transformation, Sitzungsberichte der AdW*, no. 9, Berlin/GDR 1989.

L. **Krader** (ed.), *The Ethnological Notebooks of Karl Marx: Studies of Morgan, Phear, Maine, Lubbock*, Assen 1972.

W. **Küttler**, 'Inhaltsbestimmung und Periodisierung von Gesellschaftsformationen in Marx' Briefentwürfen an Vera Zasulic', *Evolution und Revolution in der Weltgeschichte*, vol. 1, ed. H. Bartel et al., Berlin/GDR 1976, 217–47.

W. **Küttler**, *Lenins Formationsanalyse der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft in Russland vor 1905: Ein Beitrag zur Theorie und Methode historischer Untersuchung von Gesellschaftsformationen*, Berlin/GDR 1978a.

W. **Küttler**, 'Der gesellschaftliche Formationsprozeß als Dialektik von Gemeineigentum und Privateigentum: Formationstheorie und Geschichtsbild (1870–1883/84)', *Formationstheorie und Geschichte: Studien zur historischen Analyse ökonomischer Gesellschaftsformationen im Werk von Marx, Engels und Lenin*, ed. E. Engelberg, W. Küttler, Berlin/GDR 1978b, 227–92.

W. **Küttler**, 'Theoriegeschichte und methodologische Probleme historischer Formationsanalyse', Engelberg and Küttler 1978c, 719–36.

W. **Küttler** (ed.), *Das geschichtswissenschaftliche Erbe von Karl Marx*, Berlin/GDR 1983.

W. **Küttler**, L. **Lambrecht** (eds.), *Gesellschaftsformationen in der Geschichte*, AS 32, Berlin/W 1978.

N. **Poulantzas**, *Political Power and Social Classes*, London 1973.

K.H. **Tjaden**, 'Gesellschaftsformation, Formationsfolge und -gliederung', *EE* 2, 1990a, 348–63.

K.H. **Tjaden**, *Mensch – Gesellschaftsformation – Biosphäre: Über die gesellschaftliche Dialektik des Verhältnisses von Mensch und Natur*, Marburg 1990b.

F. **Tökei**, *Zur marxistischen Geschichtstheorie*, 3 vols., Budapest 1977.

H. **Wolpe**, 'Introduction', *The Articulation of Modes of Production: Essays from 'Economy and Society'*, London 1980, 1–43.

→ African mode of production, anatomy, articulation, Asiatic mode of production, base/structure, bourgeois society/civil society, bourgeois revolution, capitalism, communism, competition of systems, domestic mode of production, end of history, epoch, feudalism, formation theory, gender relations, gender egalitarian societies, Greek antiquity, guiding thread, historical materialism, history, imperialism, industrialisation, laws of history, mode of production, non-contemporaneity, oriental despotism, periodisation of history, periphery/centre, philosophy of history, precapitalist modes of production, prehistory, productive forces/relations of production, progress, relations of commerce, revolution, slavery/slave-owning society, social system, social theory, society, structure, succession of formations (pre-capitalist social formations), superstructure, theory of social development, whole, world-system

→ Afrikanische Produktionsweise, Anatomie, Artikulation/Gliederung, asiatische Produktionsweise, Basis, bürgerliche Gesellschaft, bürgerliche Revolution, Ende der Geschichte, Epoche, Feudalismus, Formationenfolge (vorkapitalistische Gesellschaftsformationen), Formationstheorie, Fortschritt, Ganzes, Geschichte, Geschichtsgesetze, Geschichtsphilosophie, Geschlechterverhältnisse, geschlechtsegalitäre Gesellschaften, Gesellschaft, Gesellschaftstheorie, griechische Antike, häusliche Produktionsweise, historischer Materialismus, Imperialismus, Industrialisierung, Kapitalismus, Kommunismus, Leitfaden, orientalische Despotie, Periodisierung der Geschichte, Peripherie/Zentrum, Produktionsweise, Produktivkräfte/Produktionsverhältnisse, Revolution, Sklaverei/Sklavenhaltergesellschaft, soziales System, Struktur, Superstruktur, Systemkonkurrenz, Theorie der gesellschaftlichen Entwicklung, Ungleichzeitigkeit, Verkehrsverhältnisse, Vorgeschichte, vorkapitalistische Produktionsweisen, Weltsystem

CHAPTER 36

Socially Necessary Labour / Labour Time

A: (waqt al-) ʿamal al-iǧtimāʿī aḍ-ḍarūrī. – F: (temps de) travail socialement nécessaire. – G: gesellschaftlich notwendige Arbeit / Arbeitszeit. – R: obščestvenno neobchodimyj trud / obščestvenno neobchodimoe rabočee vremja. – S: (tiempo de) trabajo socialmente necesario. – C: shèhuì bìyào láodòng / láodòng shíjiān 社会必要劳动 / 劳动时间

1. SNL and the associated term, SNLT, appear at first glance to be easily comprehensible and rather trivial expressions. Any labour occurring in a society can be referred to as SNL. In capitalism and, consequently, in the critique of political economy, however, that which is considered socially necessary results from dramatic developments. A reconstruction of these concepts forms the basis of **Marx**'s theory of value.

1. *Average*. – In the first section of *C 1*, **Marx** presents the specific possibilities that could determine the value of a commodity, such as the duration of work, its diversity, etc., and he comes to the conclusion: 'Each of these units of labour-power is the same as any other, to the extent that it has the character of a socially average unit of labour-power and acts […] as such; i.e. only needs, in order to produce a commodity, the labour time which is necessary on an average, or in other words is socially necessary. SNLT is the labour-time required to produce any use-value under the conditions of production normal for a given society and with the average degree of skill and intensity of labour prevalent in that society' (*C 1*, 129 [MEW 23/53]). The point of tension is the term 'average', which appears four times in the quotation. It correlates technical level, subjective skill and intensity, as well as effective demand (i.e. demand backed by the ability to pay) with each other. The average is thus always a quantity that is constituted retroactively, behind the acting subjects' backs and confronts them as a market condition. In this sense, the average's dynamics are central to Marx's crisis theory from the first chapter onward.

The young **Marx** initially characterised the way bourgeois economists dealt with average quantities as the 'pinnacle of infamy' (*Paris Notebooks*, MEGA IV.2/421): 'The average figures are formal insults, slander of the single real individuals […]. So the Ricardians are only interested in the general law. How that prevails, whether thousands are ruined over it, is completely indifferent to the law and the national economist' (480). – In the *Poverty of Philosophy*, he shifts

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_037
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

such criticism: 'The Cynicism is in the facts and not in the words that express the facts' (MECW 6/125 [MEW 4/82 et sq.]) – so he comments on **Ricardo**'s equation of people's maintenance costs with the cost of manufacturing of hats. – In *Wage Labour and Capital*, he criticises the bourgeois understanding of the 'average' in the attempt to determine value and price: 'The economists say that the *average price* of commodities is equal to the cost of production' (MECW 9/208 [6/405]). **Marx** does not contradict the result but shows that the connection formulated as a 'law' makes the formative elements of this equation disappear, so that the formation of the average appears as a coincidence. The average price is created as a result of fluctuations: 'But it is solely these fluctuations, which, looked at more closely, bring with them the most fearful devastations and, like earthquakes, cause bourgeois society to tremble to its foundations – it is solely in the course of these fluctuations that prices are determined by the cost of production' (ibid.).

In the *Grundrisse*, **Marx** arrives at a more detailed analysis of the processes that create the average, the result of which can be referred to as SNL. The 'average' is now used as a fundamental concept, as the executor of the law of value, 'as the driving force and the moving principle of the fluctuations which occur in the prices of commodities during a particular period of time' (MECW 28/75 [MEW 42/72]). The initial indignant rejection of thinking in terms of the average becomes the recognition of a real movement; criticism is used to see the average not just as a statistical quantity but to recognise it as the effect of a series of processes which, taken together, determine the capitalist relations of production in their development. 'The production of commodities must be fully developed before the scientific conviction emerges, from experience itself, that all the different kinds of private labour (which are carried on independently of each other; and yet, as spontaneously developed branches of the social division of labour, are in a situation of all-round dependence on each other) are continually being reduced to the quantitative proportions required by society. The reason for this reduction is that in the midst of the accidental and ever-fluctuating exchange relations between the products, the labour-time socially necessary to produce them asserts itself as a regulative law of nature. In the same way, the law of gravity asserts itself when a person's house collapses on top of him' (*C 1*, 168 [MEW 23/89]). It is all the more astonishing when Joan **Robinson** reads that **Marx** wanted to determine the quantities of the value of the single commodities in isolation from the social conditions that value expresses: 'When obsolete methods are still being used side by side with superior techniques or when some groups of workers are using more mechanical equipment than others, and at the same time some are more efficient than others within each group, how can we work out the exact figure for the SNLT

for each branch of production?' (**Robinson** 1962, 43 et sq.). **Marx** again: 'The value of any commodity [...] is determined not by the necessary labour-time that it itself contains, but by the *socially* necessary labour-time required for its reproduction. This reproduction may differ from the conditions of its original production by taking place under easier or more difficult circumstances' (*C III*, 238 [MEW 25/150]).

2. *Forces of production and production conditions*. – How much time is spent on the production of the means of subsistence as commodities, both in total and for each individual commodity, i.e. the quantity of SNLT, depends on the production conditions. In their constant quest to reduce the SNL in order to make extra profit or to catch up with the development of competitors, capitalists drive the development of forces of production. The term SNLT now serves to comprehend the internal dynamics of the capitalist mode of production on various levels: Capital must revolutionise 'the technical and social conditions of the [labour] process and consequently the mode of production itself', in order to increase 'the productivity of labour'. Thereby, 'the value of labour-power will fall, and the portion of the working day necessary for the reproduction of that value will be shortened' (*C I*, 432 [MEW 23/334]). This seizure takes various forms, some of which overlap: development of the technical bases, intensity, organisation of work, and the cheapening of the means of subsistence. Driven by the competition of capital, SNLT changes its magnitude in the course of the capitalist production process. 'If it is the necessary labour which determines the value of commodities, instead of all the labour time contained in them, so it is the capital which realises this determination and, at the same time, continually reduces the labour time socially necessary to produce a given commodity' (MECW 37/90 [MEW 25/97]).

The competition 'forces the others to introduce the cheaper form of production' (*C III*, 296 [MEW 25/204]); 'the determination of value by socially necessary labour-time leads to [...] the compulsion to produce commodities under the same favourable conditions' (783 et sq. [657]). In this context, **Marx** treats the extra profit and also the tendential fall in the rate of profit as consequential results. Thus, the implementation of average production conditions, which determine the measure of SNL, includes and stimulates the development of forces of production as well as their general dissemination, in order to create average working conditions.

Natural conditions also belong to the conditions of production. A general change (e.g. drought in agriculture) can also generally increase the level of SNL or reduce it if it improves (*C I*, 318 [MEW 23/224 et sq.]; *C III*, 238 [MEW 25/150]). The more fertile the soil, the lower the SNL, provided that capitalist production

has already become established. However, a 'nature that is too prodigal with her gifts', since 'development is not in that case a nature-imposed necessity', does not allow capitalism to emerge in the first place; therefore, it is not 'the absolute fertility of the soil' but the 'temperate zone' that is 'the mother country of capital' (*C I*, 649 [MEW 23/536]); since it is not an 'inherent quality of human labour to furnish a surplus product', surplus labour (for foreign persons) must be enforced in cases where a minimum of labour is sufficient for subsistence (650 [538]).

3. *Equal human labour*. – The transformation also relates to human labour-power until it performs SNL. Individual skill or laziness, speed or disability, as a result, are all planed down by the market to the current degree of SNL. The concept of SNL, thus, refers to a historically changing magnitude, depending on the level of forces of production and the ordinary, customary qualifications and the capacity of the workers, 'the average degree of skill and intensity of labour' (*C I*, 129 [MEW 23/53]). On the one hand, the capitalist class ensures that a certain type of worker, who only needs the enforced socially necessary quantity of labour time, gets disciplined according to the relations of production in the factories. This historical assertion is also mediated through the labour market; it is gradually supported by state-mediated qualification processes and accompanying moral concepts, such as work ethics, health, and conduct of life. – This assertion of a dominant SNL, which constantly varies in levels, requires all labour to be reduced to a simple equal human labour when determining values: 'This reduction appears to be an abstraction, but it is an abstraction which is made every day in the social process of production. [...] This abstraction, human labour in general, *exists* in the form of average labour which, in a given society, the average person can perform, productive expenditure of a certain amount of human muscles, nerves, brain, etc. It is *simple* labour which any average individual can be trained to do and which in one way or another he has to perform' (MECW 29/272 et sq. [MEW 13/18; MEGA II.2, 110]). The determination is both concrete, in that it refers to the natural foundations of human activity, and a computational quantity, i.e. a measure of the SNL. The associated assumptions, such as the ability to reduce 'complicated' labour to 'simple' labour, have given rise to a wide range of discussions on the issue of reduction.

4. *Necessary and surplus labour*. – In order to explain the surplus value, **Marx** shifts the determination of necessary labour time: 'In this work we have up to now used the term "necessary labour-time" to designate the time necessary under given social conditions for the production of any commodity. Henceforward we use it to designate as well the time necessary for the production of the

particular commodity labour-power' (*C I*, 325 fn. 5 [MEW 23/231 fn. 29]). The new reference also concerns the determination of SNLT at the historically and morally asserted level of workers' consumption. 'The use of the same technical term in different senses is inconvenient', Marx notes, 'but it cannot be entirely avoided in any science' (ibid.). Only then can surplus labour be defined at all as analytically distinguishable within wage labour. Necessary labour should now be called a part of labour that replaces the capital value, which is advanced in the form of wages. Only what is performed beyond that transforms the basis of surplus value into surplus labour.

One way to increase the amount of surplus labour is to extend the working day, which seems obvious due to the fact that machinery can run day and night. This form has led directly to struggles over the normal length of the working day and its regulation as a social act (*C I*, 526 et sqq. [MEW 23/425 et sqq.]). The introduction of the 'normal working day', the extended working day, as a source of surplus value has limits. Within this introduction, the time the worker needs to reproduce the wage becomes, in addition to the 'intensification of labour' (533 [431]), a battlefield between the classes, a goal of capital strategies. 'Given the length of the working day, the prolongation of the surplus labour must of necessity originate in the curtailment of the necessary labour-time; the latter cannot arise from the former' (431 [333]). The cheaper the means of consumption, the shorter the part of the SNLT which the worker needs for himself. (In his satire *Modern Times*, Charlie **Chaplin** depicted the Taylorist rationalisation: e.g. how the labour-power can be exploited more intensively when the intake of food is also accelerated or even integrated into the labour process.) – In fact, the term SNLT has changed through its relation to labour-power and surplus labour into a measurement which is itself the subject of class struggle and thus a form of compromise which changes in magnitude and content according to the state of the forces (cf. the struggle against the timekeepers who accompanied the Fordist factory organisation). Although the concept SNL can be correlated to all relations of production, it is only in its capitalist form, with its fixation on ever more strategies for achieving surplus value, that the technical processes of labour and social groupings are revolutionised in the struggle to reduce SNL.

It is from the standpoint of capitalist economics that the history of how the SNL was formed is written as a measure to which individual labour powers have to stretch themselves and by which the time which can be spent on individual types of products is socially determined. In this scenario, labour is used and market opportunities decide on the realisation of the capital advanced and of profit. The SNL also includes what **Marx** describes as the *faux frais* of capitalist production, i.e. costs which concern the problem of realisation, that are generated through competition or by the opposition between labour and capital.

5. *Planless plan/crisis.* – SNL is production for the needs of society. Hence, what is presupposed is a planfulness [*Planmäßigkeit*] and a certain kind of knowledge, both of which are actually not given. This already applies to the simple production of commodities for the market. SNL, it turns out, is what it is initially only as a promise, a virtual one so to speak; it only becomes a practical reality when its products succeed on the market. 'If the market cannot stomach the whole quantity at the normal price [...], this proves that too great a portion of the total social labour-time has been expended in the form of weaving. The effect is the same as if each individual weaver had expended more labour-time on his particular product than was socially necessary. As the German proverb has it: caught together, hung together' (*C I*, 202 [MEW 23/122]).

In its tie to the law of value, the concept SNL refers to the "normal labour-power" and the product created in this way in a rational planning process in relation to a need which is, however, measured by the ability to pay. The concept thus only becomes practically real in the capitalist mode of production. At the same time, these determinations open up a further field of social struggles: social need, i.e. the demand for certain products, can and must be influenced. In practice, the necessity of affirming itself as SNL thus gives rise, alongside constant crises, to the growing sector of advertising and commodity aesthetics.

6. *Marxist-feminist critique.* – The concept SNL contains the term social, and in fact **Marx** thus demonstrates the socialisation process of labour. However, this only applies to the capitalistically operated production process, which imposes its 'specific kind of sociality' (MECW 29/273 [MEW 13/18] transl. corr.). It is all the more "unfortunate" that in this way the literal meaning of SNL is "suspended" [*sistieren*] or rather the concept is formed so that it seems to dedicate the definition of what is socially necessary to capital.

A part of the "Second Women's Movement" that critically grappled with **Marx**'s restricting labour in the term SNL to wage labour also carried doubts about the validity of the law of value and its foundations. On the one hand, domestic labour was also understood as SNL in the sense that it produced the commodity of labour-power and was therefore a hidden part of the capitalist appropriated surplus value as unpaid labour (in summary, Sigrid **Pohl** 1984). Conversely, Marxist feminists tried to use the term SNL as a combat term for linking unpaid labour, mostly done by women, especially domestic labour, with a project of social change – thereby emphasising the term of sociality contained in the concept. The determination of what is socially necessary in terms of labour should not be left to capital and the law of value; the measure for SNL should be social needs, i.e. use values. SNL is then all work that is needed to

reproduce society, the labour power, the generations, the natural resources at a given historical-cultural level (cf. **Haug** 1996, 120). The concept should also make it possible to argue about the idea of a good, socially just, ecologically compatible society and the labour necessary to achieve it. What is at stake is 'a perspective in which, instead of a super and subordination of such activities carried out according to different temporal logics, a regulation of the total labour of society can be negotiated which, according to social, ecological and cultural standards, is compatible with the survival of human beings and non-human nature' (144).

Lise **Vogel** sees a 'hidden component' in **Marx**'s analysis of the SNL, 'the unpaid part of the daily and long-term reproduction of the labour-power and working class', which she calls the 'domestic component'. 'SNL is thus a more complicated concept than assumed. Combined together into a pair that is unusual in Marxist theory, there is social labour (with value) and domestic labour (without value)' (2000, 162). This combination makes it possible to think in terms of capital's interest in reducing SNL in the field of domestic labour, and even to assume a driving force for the technological development of the domestic mode of production, to discuss in the same context the state's takeover of domestic work (nurseries, etc.) and to put the process of labour-power reproduction on Marxist theory's agenda.

The feminist availment of SNL aims at developing a conceptual perspective which on the one hand necessarily remains vague and open, but on the other hand expands the actors of social change to include the army of unpaid workers, primarily women, and conceptualises a society in which much of the work under capitalism ranked as SNL (such as exploitation functions, advertisement, ideological co-optation, the military) can be characterised as superfluous and detrimental (as well as the corresponding expenditures as *faux frais*). These are replaced by reorganisation and other prioritising based on the needs of the members of society and not from the standpoint of capitalist accumulation.

Frigga Haug

Bibliography

F. **Haug**, 'Ökonomie der Zeit, darin löst sich schließlich alle Ökonomie auf: Herausforderungen an einen sozialistischen Feminismus', F. Haug, *Frauen-Politiken*, Hamburg 1996, 105–24.

F. **Haug**, 'Geschlechterverhältnisse als Produktionsverhältnisse', ibid., 125–51.

S. **Pohl**, *Entwicklungen und Ursachen der Frauenlohndiskriminierung: Ein feministisch-marxistischer Erklärungsansatz*, Frankfurt/M 1984.

J. **Robinson**, *Economic Philosophy*, London 1962.

L. **Vogel**, 'Domestic Labor Revisited', *Science and Society*, vol. 64, 2000, no. 2, 151–70.

II. *Discussing SNL.* – 'So far as individual commodities or categories of commodities are concerned', because of the abstractions required to determine the value of commodities based on SNL, 'value is thus bereft of any measurability', remarked Eduard **Bernstein** (1899/1993, 48, transl. corr.), who was the first to discuss the concept of SNL. Although this argument is plausible for the individual case, Bernstein is not satisfied with it, but extends it into the macroeconomic sphere. **Marx** thinks that the capacity of the market for a certain type of commodity is one of the determining factors for SNL in the production of this commodity, but there is no precise measure of society's demand for this commodity. The value is thus reduced to the status of 'a purely abstract entity, no less than the marginal utility value of the school of **Gossen**, **Jevons**, and **Böhm-Bawerk**' (51). This fails to recognise the basic pattern of the crisis-laden and retroactive socialisation of labour with **Marx**. **Bernstein** seems to read **Marx** like a leftist **Ricardo**. His critique does not apply to **Marx**, but to his reception. For example, his Russian contemporary Mikhail **Tugan-Baranovsky** understands the '**Marx**ian value theory', which he confuses with **Rodbertus**, as 'absolute theory of labour value', to the extent that SNL is conceived of as absolute substance of value. The **Marx**ian concept of value suffers from an 'internal contradiction': it is 'objectified labour. But as Marx acknowledges, the price does not coincide with the value of labour; now labour cannot be objectified in anything, if not in prices. Consequently, the value is not objectified labour' (**Tugan-Baranovsky** 1905, 140). This hasty empiristic conclusion relating the theory of value to prices without the necessary mediation will appear again and again as a vulgar economic argument in the bourgeois criticism of **Marx**.

At about the same time, two papers dealing with technology and social needs as variables of SNL were published. Karl **Diehl** refers to the 'contradictions' between actual price formation and the assumed regulation of the price level by the SNL contained in commodities. This motivated some authors to interpret SNLT as labour time according to social needs. He admits that the concept SNL has two dimensions in some of **Marx**'s and **Engels**'s texts, but insists that **Marx** 'only considered the technical condition of production when determining his "SNL"'. According to 'the strictly objective character of Marx's entire theory of value', 'the random relations of need and demand for a commodity are supposed not to influence the "value" but the "price"' (**Diehl** 1905,

127). – Tatiana **Grigorovici**, on the other hand, remarks that in **Marx**'s understanding social needs refer on a social scale only to use values as the prerequisite for any value. Nevertheless, the 'value-determining SNL according to Marx is the labour-time that is technically necessary in order to produce any kind of commodity under determinate production relations; the moment of need is thus not included in the value-determining labour time as a value-determining moment' (1910, 46). The two aspects of SNL are in fact two concepts with the same name and not two determinations of the same concept, as is sometimes assumed (45).

Rudolf **Hilferding**, on the contrary, conceives the quantitative exchange relations or the equivalence relationships between things in commodity producing societies as expressions of SNL. Labour time does not have to be the same on both sides of an exchange process in every single case. 'Commodities are the embodiment of SNLT. But labour time as such is not expressed directly [...]. Labour time is expressed only in the exchange commensurability of two articles. [...] The producer does not learn whether his commodity really satisfies a social need or whether he has made the correct use of his labour time until after the completion of the exchange' (1909/1981, 31 et sq.).

In Rosa **Luxemburg**'s introductory lectures, the technical dimension of SNL takes a back seat to the satisfaction of effective social needs (i.e. needs backed by the ability to pay), realised in the exchange process, and the problem of realisation of the commodity, the core of which is the retroactive socialisation of private labour sealed via the market. She discusses the problem using the example of a model in which cattle is the universal equivalent: 'Whether this labor was socially necessary, i.e. whether its produce has a value and secures the producer a share in the products of the whole, whether it was not rather wasted labor, all this is shown simply and solely by the fact that this product is accepted in exchange. [...] Its equivalence in value with cattle, is what now gives each private product the hallmark of socially necessary labor' (1925/2013, 245).

Isaak **Rubin** (1924), in connection with the level of forces of production, while taking into account the skill and intensity of labour, criticises those Marx interpreters who claim that even in cases of oversupply (or scarcity), commodities are sold according to the SNL expended in their production. This depends not only on the productive force of labour but also on the relationship between supply and demand. Rubin insists that despite the overproduction of a given commodity (in relation to purchasing power) the quantity of SNL contained in it remains the same, with the same unchanging production technique, only that the commodity is sold at a price below its value. The dimension of the social demand for SNL remains unclear in his approach. – Similarly Henryk

Grossmann, who objects to Fritz **Sternberg**'s view that SNL is caused by competition, argues: 'Competition takes place on the *market*, i.e. within the sphere of circulation. But value is *created* in production' (1932, 64). However, he too ignores the demand dimension of SNL and its realisation (socialisation) via the market.

Still within a neoclassical framework, Oskar **Lange** writes in 1938 that although the concept of "social needs" (demand) plays an important role in the value theory based on SNL, **Marx** has no clear functional concept of the law of demand. Like **Bernstein** and **Tugan-Baranovsky** before him, **Lange** stresses the necessity for marginal utility analysis in order to obtain a satisfactory solution to the problem (1978, 142). – The complete compatibility of marginal utility analysis with **Marx**'s view that the value of a commodity is determined by the SNL contained in it is later underlined by Leif **Johansen** (1963), Thomas **Sowell** (1967), and Howard **Sherman** (1970).

Roman **Rosdolsky** defends **Marx** against interpreters who consider the two dimensions of SNL to be an 'intolerable contradiction': 'In reality the contradiction is only apparent; it is in fact a question of different levels of analysis, which require operating with two different, but mutually complementary concepts' (1968, 117 et sq.). He misses the point, however, that this is in fact a contradiction in the production of commodities, a contradiction which is 'innate […] not in its verbal expression', as Marx would put it (MECW 32/324 [MEW 26.3/134]), but in the 'contradictory determinations of things themselves' (319 [129], transl. corr.). – Ronald **Meek** wrongly attributes to **Marx** the 'definition' of the 'value of a commodity' by the SNL contained in it. In his fervour to combat the neoclassical analysis of supply and demand in order to determine values or prices, he denies that the SNL has any dependence on demand conditions: 'The quantity of socially necessary labour required to produce a unit of any commodity was by no means dependent on demand' (1956, 179). – Helmut **Reichelt**, on the other hand, recognises the contradictions between the two dimensions of SNL as contradictions of capitalist reality itself: 'Within production's fundamental autonomisation [*Verselbständigung*] from consumption, the autonomisation of the exchange value from the use value, on the one hand, the average labour time required to produce a use value is constantly being reduced by changes in production methods, on the other hand, the total social labour is not consciously distributed among the various branches of production; distribution must assert itself naturally-spontaneously [*naturwüchsig*]' (1970, 176).

In the last quarter of the 20th cent., there was no longer any significant discussion of the concept of SNL. Among critical economists, there was a trend towards abandoning the concept of value supported by SNL. As early as

the 1940s, Joan **Robinson** claimed that value analysis was superfluous. Later on, Piero **Sraffa** showed how (equilibrium) prices could be derived directly from production conditions and income distribution without the mediation of labour values (1960/1979). The neo-Ricardians followed him on this path. Michio **Morishima** (1973), on the other hand, under the influence of John **von Neumann**, undertakes a redefinition of the value of a commodity by the necessary labour minima (and not SNL) required to produce it. In this way he attempts to establish '**Marx**'s fundamental theorem' according to which the existence of a positive rate of surplus value is a necessary and sufficient condition for the existence of a positive rate of profit.

Paresh Chattopadhyay
Both parts of the article translated by Kolja Swingle

Bibliography

E. **Bernstein**, *The Preconditions of Socialism* (1899), ed. and transl. H. Tudor, Cambridge 1993.

K. **Diehl**, *Sozialwissenschaftliche Erläuterungen zu David Ricardos Grundgesetzen der Volkswirtschaft und Besteuerung*, Teil 1, Leipzig 1905.

T. **Grigorovici**, *Die Wertlehre bei Marx und Lassalle: Beitrag zur Geschichte eines wissenschaftlichen 'Missverständnisses'*, Vienna 1910.

H. **Grossmann**, 'Die Wert-Preis Transformation bei Marx und das Krisenproblem', *ZfS*, vol. 1, 1932, no. 1, 55–84.

R. **Hilferding**, *Finance Capital* (1909), ed. T. Bottomore, transl. M. Watnick, S. Gordon, London 1981.

L. **Johansen**, 'Labour Theory of Value and Marginal Utilities', *Economics of Planning*, vol. 3, 1963, no. 2, 89–103.

O. **Lange** (with F.M. **Taylor**), *On the Economic Theory of Socialism* (1938), Minneapolis (MI) 1978.

R. **Luxemburg**, 'Introduction to Political Economy' (1925), *The Complete Works of Rosa Luxemburg*, ed. P. Hudis, vol. 1, London-New York 2013.

R. **Meek**, *Studies in the Labour Theory of Value*, London 1956.

M. **Morishima**, *Marx's Economics: A Dual Theory of Value and Growth*, Cambridge 1973.

H. **Reichelt**, *Zur logischen Struktur des Kapitalbegriffs bei Karl Marx*, Frankfurt/M 1970.

J. **Robinson**, *An Essay on Marxian Economics*, London 1942.

R. **Rosdolsky**, *Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Marxschen "Kapital"*, vol. 1, Frankfurt/M 1968.

I. **Rubin**, *Studien zur Marxschen Werttheorie* (1924), Frankfurt/M 1973.

H. **Sherman**, 'The Marxist Theory of Value Revisited', *Science and Society*, vol. 34, 1970, 257–92.

T. **Sowell**, 'Marx's *Capital* After One Hundred Years', *Canadian Journal of Economics*, vol. 33, 1967, 50–74.

P. **Sraffa**, *Production of Commodities by Means of Commodities: Prelude to a Critique of Economic Theory*, Cambridge 1960.

M. **Tugan-Baranovsky**, *Theoretische Grundlagen des Marxismus*, Leipzig 1905.

→ abstract labour, advertising, capital, collective/total labour, commodity, commodity aesthetics, competition, conditions of reproduction, consumption, crisis, critique of political economy, development of productive forces, domestic labour debate, ruling class, equality, exchange, extra profit, factory, faux frais, form of value, indifference/apathy, iron law of wages, labour power, labour time, law of value, market, mode of production, necessity, normalisation, price, production, productive forces, productive forces/relations of production, productive/unproductive labour, rate of profit, reduction problem, simple/complex labour, social law, society, standpoint/perspective, substance/measure of value, surplus labour, surplus value, use value, value, value categories, wage labour, wage-form, work/labour, working class

→ abstrakte Arbeit, Arbeit, Arbeiterklasse, Arbeitskraft, Arbeitszeit, disponible Zeit, ehernes Lohngesetz, einfache/komplizierte Arbeit, Extraprofit, Fabrik, faux frais, Gebrauchswert, Gesamtarbeit, Gesellschaft, Gesetz (soziales), Gleichgültigkeit, Gleichheit, Hausarbeitsdebatte, herrschende Klasse, Kapital, Konkurrenz, Konsumtion, Krise, Kritik der politischen Ökonomie, Lohnarbeit, Lohnform, Markt, Mehrarbeit, Mehrwert, Normalisierung, Notwendigkeit, Preis, Produktion, Produktionsweise, produktive/unproduktive Arbeit, Produktivkräfte, Produktivkräfte/Produktionsverhältnisse, Produktivkraftentwicklung, Profitrate, Reduktionsproblem, Reproduktionsbedingungen, Standpunkt/Perspektive, Tausch, Ware, Warenästhetik, Werbung, Wert, Wertform, Wertgesetz, Wertkategorien, Wertsubstanz/-maß

CHAPTER 37

Trade

A: tiǧāra. – F: commerce. – G: Handel. – R: torgovlja. – S: comercio. – C: shāngyè, màoyì 商业, 贸易

'"Buy cheap and sell dear" is the law of commerce' (*C III*, 447 [MEW 25/342]), which developed long before industrial capitalism, until the latter, 'as a special function of a special capital' (379 [278]), made the former an integral component of itself, the general function of which is to realise surplus value. In contrast, the pre-capitalist circulation of goods regulated by T remained largely external to production, which was still for the most part based on natural economy.

Early forms of T already appeared in later primitive societies after the transition to a sedentary way of life and agricultural production. Products such as salt and metals, later spices and other objects of luxury consumption constituted typical commodities for long-distance T that T routes were named after ("Salt Road", "Silk Road", etc.). Long-distance and domestic T relations acquired special importance in antiquity and other advanced civilisations with a developed central power. During European high feudalism, commodity production and T, after a long phase of decline in the early Middle Ages, experienced a significant upturn with the emergence of cities and trading companies that were active across regions (Italian urban republics, the Hanseatic League). This meant, at the same time, both the blossoming and the beginning crisis of the feudal mode of production.

The Renaissance heralded the epoch of merchant capitalism, defined by merchants' and usurers' capital, which **Marx** characterises as a feature of the manufacturing period (*C I*, 455 et sqq. [MEW 23/356 et sqq.]). At the end of the 19th cent., world T reached its maximum expansion for the time being, before collapsing in the imperialist drive to war. After the destruction of the Second World War, resurgent world T on the basis of a new international regime served as an important framework for the economic boom in devastated Europe and facilitated the Fordist mode of development. Under the auspices of neoliberal globalisation policies, the liberalisation of world T advanced the implementation of transnational high-tech capitalism.

1. At the time Adam **Smith** published his major work, England was already in a state of transition toward industrial capitalism. Merchant capitalism, which was now being sublated in this new form, the emergence of which it had itself

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_038
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

brought about, therefore appeared to him in light of the dawning era of industrial capitalism: increasing productivity through the division of labour. Smith's critique applies primarily to those mercantilist economists who recommended to their mercantile state the accumulation of gold through systematic export surpluses. Smith relativises – as did William **Petty** before him in an even more pointed manner (see MECW 29/293 [13, 38]) – the direct importance of the balance of T and sees an immense stimulation of production in the expansion of sales markets (*Wealth*, 514 et sq.). **Smith**'s simplest model of T between equal trading nations states that both will benefit from T if 'the commodities exchanged [...] are supposed to be of equal value', the 'two capitals employed in the T will [...] be equal' and the changes in 'the revenue and maintenance which their distribution will afford to the inhabitants of each will be equal, or nearly equal' (514). He does not specify the processes implicit in all these assumptions.

David **Ricardo** sharpens **Smith**'s argument by stating that free T under certain conditions is advantageous for two nations even if one of the two can produce more efficiently in all production processes. This so-called theory of comparative advantage (also known as '**Ricardo**'s theory of international T') recommends that the more productive country specialise in the productive process in which its productive advantage is greater; complementary to this, the unproductive country should specialise in the production process with the lowest lag in productivity. Classical economics as a whole understands productivity as labour productivity, i.e. output divided by labour input. As was the case with **Smith**, the crux of this conclusion is in the simplifying assumptions of the model required for analytical proof. Unlike Smith, however, **Ricardo**'s formalised presentation allows for a critique of these assumptions. Like **Smith**, he advocated free T; however, he did so more rigorously, and indeed less prudently in the formulation of his economic policy advice.

So, for classical political economy, T is synonymous with what would later become known as international T. It deals primarily with guidelines for the foreign T policies of nation states. Its representatives saw themselves as advisors to these nation states, and advocated free T – not as an end in itself, but as a precondition for the growth of production and the welfare-enhancing effects that it supposedly engenders.

2. In the style of the political commentators of his time, **Marx** initially treated nation states as active subjects: T is one of the global terrains upon which the 'Five Powers' (MECW 12/244 [MEW 9/251]) interact. It was only in the course of his in-depth studies concerning the critique of political economy that Marx developed a more subtle and theoretically innovative approach. He abandoned

the "power-political/action-theoretical" level and made use of the approaches to commodity exchange available in the literature of his time in order to consolidate them into his analysis of labour-value. He approvingly quotes Benjamin **Franklin**: 'T in general being nothing else but the exchange of labour for labour, the value of all things is [...] mostly justly measured by labour' (MECW 29/296 [MEW 13/42, fn.]). In this sense, T is a necessary function of the circulation of commodities, and thus an analytical category which for its part enables the definition of 'commodity-producing society' as a historically specific mode of production.

Marx initially proceeds from **Ricardo**'s analysis of the *magnitude of value*, as developed in the latter's theory of international T. **Marx** praises **Ricardo**, given that '[u]nlike Adam **Smith** [...]' he 'formulated and expounded in the clearest manner' the 'determination of exchange value by labour time' (300 et sq. [45 et sq.]). This recognition has misled some interpreters to see in **Ricardo**'s theory of international T the international form of **Marx**'s law of value. Marx's labour theory of value, stimulated by **Ricardo**, is, however, so far removed from the former that its extension to international T relations – never carried out by **Marx** himself – can hardly be folded back into **Ricardo**'s view of the world market.

In *Capital*, T is defined more precisely, above all in historical-theoretical terms. After introducing his labour theory of value (*C I*, 125–244 [23/49–160]), **Marx** returns to the real-historical dimension – but now enriched by the concept of 'capital' (247 et sqq. [161 et sqq.]) deduced from the chain of *labour value – exchange value – money*. The historical place of T as merchant capitalism, that is, as a precursor and catalyst of the capitalism of 'large-scale industry' (492 [391]) of the 19th cent., lies in the 'so-called primitive accumulation' (871 et sqq. [741 et sqq.]). Correspondingly, this is where Marx also locates mercantilism. 'In the period when capitalist production was in its infancy things often happened as they had done in the period of infancy of the medieval town, where the question as to which of the escaped serfs should be master and which servant was in great part decided by the earlier or later date of their flight. The snail's pace of advance under this method by no means corresponded with the commercial requirements of the new world market, which had been created by the great discoveries of the end of the fifteenth century. [...] The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the indigenous population of that continent, the beginnings of the conquest and plunder of India, and the conversion of Africa into a preserve for the commercial hunting of blackskins, are all things which characterize the dawn of the era of capitalist production. These idyllic proceedings are the chief moments of primitive accumulation. Hard on their heels follows the

commercial war of the European nations, which has the globe as its battlefield' (914 et sq. [777 et sq.]).

Historically, merchant capitalism emerged before industrial capitalism, which in turn, once it had imposed itself, subordinated the former as its organ. 'Today, industrial supremacy brings with it commercial supremacy. In the period of manufacture it is the reverse: commercial supremacy produces industrial predominance. Hence the preponderant role played by the colonial system at that time' (918 [782]).

The embedding of T in the historical development of capital accumulation also illustrates the intrinsic interrelationship between specific political and technological developments in certain states and the logic of capital accumulation: the naval supremacy of the Netherlands and England implied secure transport routes and enabled the rapid and cheap transportation of commodities, which ultimately shortened the turnaround time of merchant capital and increased merchant profit rates (*C II*, 327 et sq. [MEW 24/254]). The central categories of the era of industrial capitalism, such as the rate of profit (*C III*, 400, 1039 [25/298, 911]) thus already emerged under specific political, economic, and technical preconditions before their actual heyday.

In his *Speech on the Question of Free Trade* (1848), **Marx** declares free T to be the progressive foreign T regime of the era, as it 'hastens the Social Revolution' (MECW 6/465 [MEW 4/458]). Its acceleration of capitalist processes also intensifies the antagonisms they entail. Marx's later theoretical discoveries would have supported an assessment of free T that went further in this direction, i.e. emphasising the special role of the state in industrial capitalism. Marx himself, however, never managed to complete this analysis. Not least for this reason was he unable to foresee the ability of capitalist states to subject the developing antagonisms between workers and capitalists to a new nationalism – developments that led to world war rather than world revolution.

3. The increasing importance of money was directly connected to the growth of world T. Due to the considerable span of time between purchase and sale as a consequence of long T routes, pre-financing became a necessity. The very emergence of merchant capitalism was connected to the development of the credit system. The great voyages of discovery and intensified foreign relations demanded corresponding financing. Thus, the trading houses of the Fuggers and Medicis were at the same time moneylenders, and it was from their operations that the institutionalisation of the modern banking system evolved. With the expansion of T, the required sums of capital became increasingly greater. Institutions such as the East Indian Trading Company functioned as centres

for raising capital, which soon took over the financing of manufacturing and industrial enterprises (see **Altvater** 1992, 136) and rang in the era of "large-scale industry".

3.1 In the transition from the 19th to the 20th cent., the development of international T reached its high point for the time being. The 'ever more intimate relationship' between 'bank and industrial capital' by means of which capital 'assumes the form of finance capital', as Rudolf **Hilferding** (1909/1981, 21) observes, had led to 'the previously separate spheres of industrial, commercial, and bank capital' being 'brought under the common direction of high finance' (301). The process of accumulation, centralised in the hands of a small number of managements, enabled the incorporation of ever new territories for the development of new possibilities of exploitation – or: imperialism. This implied the reintroduction of import tariffs and the aggressive export of capital in the service of national finance capital (see 311). Hilferding thereby draws attention to the international movement of capital. To implement its interests, finance capital is reliant upon a 'politically powerful' nation state (334) which no longer presents itself as a liberal free-trade state and turns toward aggressive arms, colonial, and foreign policy engagement. The tensions ultimately discharged in the First World War, which marked the end of English hegemony. The USA became the role model for the capitalist state of the 20th cent. The crises of finance capital continued throughout the interwar period and culminated in 1929, with stock market crashes causing international T to collapse. The "Great Depression" that followed was a decisive precondition for fascism gaining strength in Europe and one of the causes of the Second World War.

3.2 In response to the challenges of the major crisis, fascism, and state socialism, 'integrated capitalism' emerged as a compromise between capital and labour (**Hanappi** 1989). At the same time, the centralisation of capital effected by finance capital provided the foundation for the great Fordist enterprises. However, the stabilisation of Fordism was only achieved through the establishment of uniform rules for the movement of commodities and capital on the world market; as a result, the 'tendency toward convergence of the conditions of production' (**Hübner** 1988, 53) of an *Atlantic Fordism* was able to assert itself. Otherwise, the small Western European economies probably would 'not have been able to catch up to the Fordist model of accumulation by imitation' (ibid.). After 1944, the USA emerged as the global hegemonic power that secured the international order economically and militarily, as did the global currency system of Bretton Woods which, relying on the US dollar as its reserve currency, guaranteed the convertibility of national currencies within a sys-

tem of fixed exchange rates, thus serving the purpose of counteracting the fundamental economic instability of the global dynamic. Robert **Gilpin** captured the underlying compromise in the formula '**Keynes** at home and **Smith** abroad' (1987, 355). Following the experiences with the consequences of protectionism during the interwar period, a Keynesian national economic policy was to be accompanied by the liberalisation of international T. While expanded sales markets and external pressures to increase productivity stimulated economic growth, the positive effects of Keynesian policies on employment, income, and welfare ensured that the population tolerated intensified competition. John **Ruggie** describes the international regulatory structure of *Pax Americana* as 'embedded liberalism' (1982). Tensions between the internationalisation of exchange relations and the domestic possibilities for economic governance existed from the outset (above all in the USA). Due to the catch-up process in European countries and Japan during the 1950s and 1960s, the USA began to lose its dominant position on the economic field. Its inflationary monetary policy (through excessive money creation) and the decline in industrial productivity led to grave tensions within the Bretton Woods system between fixed exchange rates and actual value. In 1971, the USA was forced to accept its first T deficit (see **Hübner** 1988, 54). Since the increase in currency adjustments due to differing developments in productivity and the diversification of so-called Eurodollar markets (international capital markets) into other currencies at the end of the 1960s, a wide scope for foreign exchange speculation had opened up as a result of crisis-induced excess liquidity. Now foreign exchange T was expanding. While the international function of money shifted – from being a measure of value and means of circulation to becoming a means of payment and credit money – the ability of the US Federal Reserve to control the money supply diminished. Finally, in 1973, increasingly intense waves of speculation caused the collapse of the Bretton Woods system.

3.3 While the countries of *Atlantic Fordism* as a whole profited considerably from the T- and financial regime of the post-war era, this generally did not apply to the so-called developing countries. The strategy of import substitution industrialisation, which was initially successful following the world economic crisis of 1929, proved incapable of organising the transition from extensive to intensive growth. This made 'diversification on the world market a "must", although the corresponding gains were limited given the economic structures of the world market that had developed by then' (**Altvater**/**Mahnkopf** 1996, 406). In the late 1960s, a critique from the "South" took up this point, calling into question conditions on the world market. Dependency theory, for example, attributed the impoverishment of the "Third World" to disadvantageous struc-

tural integration into the world market, and correspondingly demanded a new world T order (**Emmanuel** 1972; **Cardoso**/**Faletto** 1977; **Shaikh** 1980).

3.4 In the era of neoliberal globalisation, international T in goods and services once again expanded. The largest part of international T, however, was concentrated in exchange between the triad regions. 'Predominant by far was the intra-industrial T on the basis of production and service networks organised on an increasingly transnational basis' (**Becker** et al. 1997, 8). This T was less based on the principle of specialisation *between* industries, so much as on that of specialisation *within* industries, as the 'production of similar products, but in different ways' (**Lipietz** 1997, 18). Between 1970 and 1999, the volume of world T increased by an average of 5.9 % annually, while global production only increased by about 3.7 % (**IMF** 2001, 14). This was made possible by a revolution in transportation and communication technologies (container shipping, continental road networks, high-speed rail, air freight, and the Internet) at the cost of the corresponding damage to the natural environment.

T in foreign exchange, derivatives, and stocks was even more dynamic. With the establishment of a regime of flexible exchange rates, and the resulting fluctuations, T in foreign exchange veritably exploded (see **WEED** 2000). In turn, risks in international T resulting from fluctuating exchange rates led to the development of hedging instruments, so-called derivatives. Here, T takes place "in the future" and does not have to be financed in the present. With *futures*, a trader can build up huge positions with minimal collateral. Originally developed as an innovation to hedge risks, T in derivatives increased instability. T in shares and bonds had grown over 10 % annually since 1980 (**BIZ** 1999). Decoupled from the real development in the value of companies, the continuing stock market boom during the 1990s drove the average price level up to an estimated 50 % overvaluation (**Seitz** 2000, 16). In fact, most activity on the financial markets did not serve to finance real production, but rather speculative aims (see **Candeias** 1998, 88), while a fraction of the foreign exchange traded on a daily basis would have been sufficient to finance the entirety of world T (and foreign liabilities) (see **Walter** 1998, 21).

International currency competition assigns decisive importance to monetary stability for the competitiveness of national economies, and favours a kind of neo-mercantilist strategy for generating T balance surpluses when a country's own currency tends to be undervalued. The function of the 'modern trading state' (**Rosecrance** 1986) or 'national competitive states' (**Hirsch** 1995) consists in 'promoting innovations in product, process, organizational, and market innovations in order to strengthen the structural competitiveness of a national economy through intervention on the supply side [...] and to sub-

ordinate social policy to the requirements of labor market flexibility or the constraints of international competition' (**Jessop** 1997, 73).

Globally, this process was advanced through the establishment of free T zones such as the European Single Market, the North American NAFTA, the South American MERCOSUR, the Central African Economic and Monetary Community, or the Asian APEC. Internationally, the IMF, which assumed the function of enforcing the structural adjustment of non-liberalised economies, and the WTO, ensured free T and international competition. The "silent compulsion of economic relations" in currency and T competition operated against the welfare state and led to the erosion of ecological and social standards as well as to the impoverishment of a large part of the global population. While GATT or the WTO allow for the protection of national conditions 'necessary to protect human, animal or plant life or health' (Art. XX), this only applies to the characteristics of the finished product, not to production and working conditions. So, the analysis of world T must be supplemented by an analysis of those factors, in order to grasp its effect on the 'wealth of nations'. Free T can be beneficial for some countries with comparatively more developed production methods and corresponding extra profits. But 'social dumping' becomes an essential factor of competition. 'The use of this deflationary method of gaining competitive advantage led other countries, whose relative competitiveness deteriorated, to react in similar ways, reinforcing the deflationary spiral' (**Dunford** 1995, 131).

Those unable to participate in the new world T regime due to a lack of foreign exchange sought out informal channels of exchange. The share of so-called *countertrade* or *barter*, the exchange of commodities occurring without the intermediary of money as means of payment, amounted to up to 25% (**IMF** 1995, 27). The informal side of international T also includes illegal transactions, such as the drug T, unregistered arms trafficking, human trafficking, and money laundering. This share of international T is difficult to measure. One indication of its scope is provided by the global current account deficit (**Altvater**/**Mahnkopf** 1996, 241).

3.5 The liberalisation of the T in services pursued by the WTO in the 1990s was primarily concerned with the deregulation of markets that had thus far been dominated by national monopolies: telecommunications, media, post, and electricity. At the end of the 20th cent., T in "services" of all kinds already accounted for one third of global T, or 2.7 trillion US dollars (**OECD** 2000, 21).

At the beginning of the 21st cent., "immaterial products" came into the focus of the WTO: the agreement on *Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights*

(TRIPS) extended its sphere of influence. The WTO created the preconditions for the valorisation of hitherto uncommoditised spheres (see **Brand/Görg** 2000, 102). The disposal over intellectual property rights became the basis for extra profits in the race against the competition. That includes the patenting of genes and entire lifeforms. The T in goods that can be represented as a bitstream was an essential segment of the new Internet economy. While these goods require high development costs, the marginal costs of their reproduction and distribution are practically zero. The conflict over the music file-sharing exchange *Napster* illustrates how 'the contradiction between information goods and their value form' led to the feverish development of encryption technologies by the corporations (**Haug** 2000b, 629 et sqq.).

Electronic T via the Internet included (and continues to include) not just goods that are "delivered" online, but started to pervade all areas, from mail order to air travel to insurance – the largest turnover in "e-commerce" being generated by classic retail companies such as, e.g., the Otto GmbH. A revolution in the structures of retail and wholesale T, 'the micro- and macro-economic impact of which is still unforeseeable' (**Reisin** 2000, 681), was in the offing.

3.6 The WTO is 'the most important means of imposing the global liberalization of T' and of 'strengthening globally operating capital against the local and national' (**O'Connor** 2000, 157); along with the IMF and other international financial institutions, it represents the institutional expression of a 'transnational synthesis of power' (**Röttger** 1997, 119). The WTO and IMF, which 'decide on and enforce universally valid rules' in secret negotiations without democratic control, pursue 'a neoliberal utopia of universal deregulation' (**Bourdieu** 2000, 16). Especially in the Tricontinental countries, they enforced open markets without forcing the centres to dismantle barriers to T, for example for textiles or agricultural products. The extent of protectionism and what product groups it is to apply to was to lie in the defining power of the capitalist centres.

The implementation of the new T order did not just depend on the political and economic balance of power; it was preceded by the utmost appealing appearance of commodities, which secured the consent of large parts of the global population: the 'aesthetic presentation' of commodities, broadcast globally via satellite television, acted as a 'motor of globalisation', whereby the 'inclusion of the population of the world in the globalised imaginary of capitalist commodity aesthetics goes hand-in-hand with the exclusion of the majority of the population even from the consumerist/reified realisation of the promise of use-value' (**Haug** 1999, 34 et sqq., 42).

The empty promises of global free T and the contradictions of neoliberal globalisation constituted the starting points for struggles against the "total

commodification" of the world. These struggles contributed to the failure of the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) and the WTO conference in Seattle, which could be seen as a 'turning point' in the development of global society (**Ramonet** 2000, 1). The failure of the so-called 'millennium round' of negotiations for further liberalisation of international T, however, was less the result of the resistance of an emerging global movement so much as it was due to inter-capitalist contradictions between leading countries. And yet, although 'highly fragmented' and characterised by 'diverse ideological differences' (**O'Connor** 2000, 159), critics of globalisation of all shades have continued forming a 'force for a multinational civil society', insisting on its demand for a 'globalisation of democratic politics' (**Haug** 2000a, 6) ever since.

Mario Candeias and Gerhard Hanappi
Translated by Alexander Locascio

Bibliography

E. **Altvater**, *Die Zukunft des Marktes*, Münster 1992.

E. **Altvater**, B. **Mahnkopf**, *Grenzen der Globalisierung*, Münster 1996.

Bank für Internationalen Zahlungsausgleich (BIZ), *Jahresbericht*, Basel 1999.

S. **Becker**, T. **Sablowski**, W. **Schumm** (eds.), *Jenseits der Nationalökonomie?*, Berlin-Hamburg 1997.

P. **Bourdieu**, 'Gegen die Politik der Entpolitisierung: Die Ziele der europäischen Sozialbewegung', *SoZ – Sozialistische Zeitung*, 14 September 2000, 16.

U. **Brand**, Ch. **Görg**, 'Die Regulierung des Marktes und die Transformation der Naturverhältnisse', *Prokla* 118, vol. 30, 2000, 83–106.

M. **Candeias**, 'Von der Krise des Fordismus zu monetären Instabilitäten auf den Weltfinanzmärkten', *Initial*, vol. 9, 1998, no. 6, 83–98.

F.H. **Cardoso**, E. **Faletto**, *Abhängigkeit und Entwicklung in Lateinamerika*, Frankfurt/M 1977.

M. **Dunford**, 'Cohesion, Growth and Inequality in the European Union', A. Amin, J. Tomaney (eds.), *Behind the Myth of European Union*, London 1995, 125–48.

A. **Emmanuel**, *Unequal Exchange*, London 1972.

S. **George**, 'Den Krieg der Ideen gewinnen', M. Candeias, F. Deppe (eds.), *Ein neuer Kapitalismus?*, Hamburg 2001, 207–17.

R. **Gilpin**, *The Political Economy of International Relations*, Princeton (NJ) 1987.

G. **Hanappi**, *Die Entwicklung des Kapitalismus: Gibt es lange Wellen der Konjunktur?*, Frankfurt/M 1989.

W.F. **Haug**, *Politisch richtig oder richtig politisch: Linke Politik im transnationalen High-Tech-Kapitalismus*, Berlin-Hamburg 1999.

W.F. **Haug**, 'Die neue Aurora', *Argument* 234, vol. 42, 2000(a), 6.

W.F. **Haug**, 'Prolegomena zu einer Kritik der Neuen Ökonomie', *Argument* 238, vol. 42, 2000(b), 619–45.

R. **Hilferding**, *Finance Capital* (1909), London 1985.

J. **Hirsch**, *Der nationale Wettbewerbsstaat*, Berlin 1995.

K. **Hübner**, 'Flexibilisierung und Verselbständigung des monetären Weltmarktes', *Prokla* 71, vol. 18, 1988, 49–65.

J. **Huffschmid**, *Politische Ökonomie der Finanzmärkte*, Hamburg 1999.

Initiativgruppe Regulationstheorie, 'Globalisierung und Krise des Fordismus', Becker et al. 1997, 7–27.

International Monetary Fund (IMF), *Issues in International Exchange and Payments Systems*, Washington (DC) 1995.

International Monetary Fund (IMF), *Annual Report 2000*, Washington (DC) 2001.

B. **Jessop**, 'Die Zukunft des Nationalstaats – Erosion oder Reorganisation?', Becker et al. 1997, 50–95.

A. **Lipietz**, 'Die Welt des Postfordismus', *Sozialismus*, Supplement 7/8, 1997, 1–43.

H.P. **Martin**, H. **Schumann**, *Die Globalisierungsfalle*, Hamburg 1996.

J. **O'Connor**, 'Die Konferenz von Seattle und die Anti-WTO-Bewegung', *Prokla* 118, vol. 30, 2000, 157–70.

OECD, *International Trade in Goods and Services*, 2000 (www.oecd.org/st/tradhome.html).

I. **Ramonet**, 'Morgenröte', *Le Monde Diplomatique*, vol. 6, 2000, no. 1, 1.

F.-M. **Reisin**, 'Der elektronische Welthandel im Internet', *Argument* 238, vol. 42, 2000, 661–86.

R. **Rosecrance**, *The Rise of the Trading State*, New York 1986.

B. **Röttger**, *Neoliberale Globalisierung und eurokapitalistische Regulation*, Münster 1997.

J.G. **Ruggie**, 'International Regimes, Transactions and Change: Embedded Liberalism in the Postwar Economic Order', *International Organisation*, vol. 36, 1982, no. 2, 379–416.

K. **Seitz**, 'Gefährlicher Treibstoff: Droht dem US-Boom ein jähes Ende?', *Die Zeit*, 5 January 2000, 16.

A. **Shaikh**, 'The Laws of International Exchange', E.J. Nell (ed.), *Growth, Profits and Property*, Cambridge 1980, 204–35.

N. **Walter**, 'Die asiatische Krise: Umdenken nach dem Rausch', *Die Zeit*, 15 January 1998, 21.

WEED – **Weltwirtschaft, Ökologie & Entwicklung e.V.**, *Kapital braucht Kontrolle: Die internationalen Finanzmärkte*, Bonn 2000.

→ accumulation, capitalism, circulation, colonialism, competition, critique of globalisation, dependency theory, developing countries, division of labour, finance capital, financial crisis, financial markets, Fordism, free trade, global economy, globalisation, high-tech mode of production, imperialism, international division of labour, internet, joint-stock company, Keynesianism, merchant capital, money, nation, nation state, neocolonialism, neoliberalism, peripheral capitalism, profit, protectionism, rate of profit, stock market, transnational corporations, transnational capitalism, transport, unequal development, unequal exchange, world market, world money, world system

→ Akkumulation, Aktiengesellschaft, Arbeitsteilung, Börse, Dependenztheorie, Entwicklungsländer, Finanzkapital, Finanzkrise, Finanzmärkte, Fordismus, Freihandel, Geld, Globalisierung, Globalisierungskritik, Handelskapital, hochtechnologische Produktionsweise, Imperialismus, internationale Arbeitsteilung, Internet, Kapitalismus, Keynesianismus, Kolonialismus, Konkurrenz, Nation, Nationalstaat, Neokolonialismus, Neoliberalismus, peripherer Kapitalismus, Profit, Profitrate, Protektionismus, transnationale Konzerne, transnationaler Kapitalismus, Transport, ungleiche Entwicklung, ungleicher Tausch, Weltgeld, Weltmarkt, Weltsystem, Weltwirtschaft, Zirkulation

CHAPTER 38

Witch

A: sāḥira. – F: sorcière. – G: Hexe. – R: ved'ma, koldun'ja. – S: bruja. – C: nǚwū 女巫

Fascination and persecution meet in the figure of the W. It seems that the 'world-historic defeat' (**Engels**, MECW 26/165 [MEW 21/60 et sq.]) of women, millennia of patriarchal domination, and resistance to that domination have imbued the associated image of women with its ambivalence. To the extent that research into witchcraft provides a critical reading of history as it is written from the point of view of the victors, or reads that history against the grain, such research takes on a particularly explosive character.

The etymology of the German word for W, "Hexe", is unclear. 'The word, found only in West Germanic (hecse, hesse in Middle High German; hagzissa in Old High German; [...] haegtes(se) in Old English, abbreviated to hag in English) is an obscure composite' that can be traced back to 'Hag' (fence, hedge, corral), a word that was presumably combined with the '(vernacular) Norwegian word *tysja*' (elf; crippled or unkempt woman; cf. Etymol WB; Duden *Herkunftswörterbuch*); on the other hand, 'the Swiss feminine noun "hagsch, hâgsch" = "mischievous woman, W" may be the same word'.

Eds.

1. *Women's Movement and Witchcraft Research.* – 1. No symbol has asserted itself as successfully within the second women's movement of Western countries as that of the W. Despair and accusation, defiant self-confidence and hope, rebellion and mourning are encapsulated within the W. The W stood for centuries of female oppression and violence, for women's secret knowledge and the subjugation of the female sex, its disempowerment through medical doctors and science, and women's exclusion from secular social power. But the W also stood for the self-confident, voluntary identification with cunning, guile, aggression; it was a form of self-empowerment and way to challenge the oppressors. For a time, there was not a single space within the women's movement that the W had not flown through; as a rag doll mounted on a broom, the W became a popular gift, and the production of Ws became a profitable business. Soon women's bars had names such as *Blocksberg*, a book was titled *Hexengeflüster* ('W Whispers'), a women's rock band 'announces the return of Ws' (**Bovenschen** 1977,

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_039
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

260). Irmtraud **Morgner** wrote her W novel *Amanda*, which undertakes a subversive elaboration of the division of women into a "normal" diurnal and a W-like nocturnal figure, transforming the attribution of witchcraft to women into a political virtue: the ability to gather in revolutionary assemblies at night (on the Blocksberg), in order to steer the reformist improvements initiated during the day in the right direction. The many fairy tales in which Ws play a role were reread and rewritten, as an awakened sensibility perceived that these figures were usually old and hunchbacked and were burned at the end. This amounted to a murderous social exclusion of mainly old and disabled women. The night before May Day, *Walpurgis Night*, was rediscovered. In it, women 'reconquered the night' and alluded ironically to the working class's day of struggle as they moved through the cities. 'At a demonstration against the Italian abortion criminal provisions in Rome, 100,000 women chanted "La Gioia, la gioia si inventa, donne si nasce, streghe si diventa!" (roughly: Joy, joy, is something one invents; born women, Ws we become!) and: "Tremate, tremate, le streghe son tornate!" (Tremble, tremble, the Ws have returned!)' (qtd. in **Bovenschen** 1977, 259).

Within the women's movement, a veritable fever of popular W literature began. The Inquisition exposed the machinations of patriarchy; the testimonies of the W-hunts were unearthed and interpreted, again and again, in terms of a conspiracy against all those women who knew something, were able to do something, or somehow did not want to submit to normality. This was also a question of providing the women's movement with a historical foundation, upon which liberation from centuries of oppression could be articulated self-confidently, not merely as victims, but in terms of a specific competence. This literature included, for example, Barbara **Ehrenreich**'s and Deirdre **English**'s very widely read book on Ws, midwives and nurses, *Hexen, Hebammen und Krankenschwestern* (1975; a third edition was published within a year, and the 15th edition in 1992), which proceeds with great determination in its scandalisation of a domination that is based as much on the withholding of knowledge as on the exclusion of the bearers of empirical knowledge: 'Women have always disposed of curative knowledge. They were the uncertified doctors and anatomists of the occidental past', were 'abortionists, caretakers and counsellors', 'pharmacists' and 'midwives'. 'For centuries, these women were medical doctors without a degree, who had been denied access to books and lectures. They learned from one another and passed their practical knowledge on from neighbour to neighbour and from mother to daughter. "Wise women" is what they were called in common parlance, while to the authorities they were Ws and quacks. The art of healing is part of our female heritage, of our history and our birthright' (**Ehrenreich**/**English** 1975, 5). An image of a community emerges, one that the women's movement can directly connect with: 'Most Ws were

healers who helped the peasant people; their oppression was one of the first struggles in the long history of male oppression of women healers' (9). On this view, it was through an alliance against these women (under the auspices of the ruling class) that the new European medical profession constituted itself, a profession 'that [assisted] the W hunters with expert medical opinions. An aspect of the female has since always been associated with witchcraft; an aura of impurity has remained' (10). Thus the women's health movement is said to be the direct heir of the 'medieval covens', and 'its contemporary adversaries can regard those men as precursors who ruthlessly enforced the extermination of the Ws' (10).

The *Malleus Maleficarum* (1486/87, first published in German in 1906) was reprinted during the period of the women's movement (1974). At the same time, a general knowledge about Ws and their persecution was by no means already available or being aspired to within the movement. Rather, it was as if women's multiple experiences of oppression during the 20th cent. were echoed in the constructions of Ws of the 16th cent., an imaginary that could strengthen the liberation movement. The W became a myth. This myth is what Silvia **Bovenschen** has in mind when she characterises the 'form of the situational appropriation of the past' as something that is 'qualitatively [distinct] from the scientific-archival' form. 'Within it, there occurs a blending of elements of historical and social fantasy that are sensitive to the underground existence of forbidden images; it is anarchic, rebellious in its abandonment of chronology and historical rigor' (1977, 261 et sq.). She discovers within identification with the W an 'unrequited longing for liberation' (262) and deploys Walter **Benjamin** to give the movement historical dignity: 'To articulate the past historically does not mean to recognize it "the way it really was" [...]. It means to seize hold of a memory as it flashes up at a moment of danger' (1940/1969, 255). Of course, Benjamin's dictum was not to be understood as a carte blanche for the abolition of the difference between fact and fiction, but as a maxim to reveal the "other side" of facts.

2. A few years after this movement's identification with the W, the associated literature was convicted of innumerable errors (e.g. by **Hervé** 1982). At the same time, however, critical W research was experiencing a renaissance. As a matter of fact, the adoption of the figure of the W opened up a space for mythology, which soon revived mother goddesses and gave rise to shamans, along with the possibility of lucratively marketing esoteric magic. Apart from Walpurgis Night, all that remained of the W from the women's movement was a fading memory, associating the women's health movement with naturopathy, and a kind of legitimisation for a new, feminist-schooled historical scholarship, driven by the

impulse to uncover the male gaze in earlier scholarship and generally writing this history anew by introducing gender perspectives (this is the thrust of **Becker** et al. 1977 and **Honegger** 1978).

Now, works such as those of the French historian Jules **Michelet**, from 1862, were reread. 'From when does the Sorceress date?' To this self-posed question he replies: 'I answer unhesitatingly, "From the ages of despair"' (**Michelet** 1992, xiv; qtd. in **Becker** et al. 1977, 7). The notion of persons "innocently persecuted", taken for "wise women and healers", brought **Michelet** the reproach that he had 'romanticised' his subject. By contrast, the newer witchcraft scholarship of the 1970s was primarily concerned with studying the historical circumstances and those interlinked economic, political, and cultural preconditions within which the pattern of interpretation called "W" emerged, in addition to asking about the function of this pattern of interpretation for engagement with social problems.

Claudia **Honegger** (1978) dates the beginning of the 'W craze' to the break with 'belief in demons': 'Now, it was [...] Ws, that is, human beings, that rode a broomstick to the orgiastic sabbath. To this were added the association [...] with harmful sorcery, the maleficium, and its valorisation by means of a thinking more strongly oriented toward nature, as well as the ascription of the developed notion of witchcraft to the female sex. The W pattern was nowhere to be found, in this form, before the late 15th century. It was only the Medieval Inquisition, and then secular jurisdiction, that carried it from the city to the countryside' (33). In making this claim, Honegger opposes the view that the W is the form in which the feminine has always been persecuted. Rather, she examines the manner in which church and state combine 'irrationality with formalist reason' and is thereby able to link the W with the emergence of capitalist societies (33 et sqq.). – This is taken further by Silvia **Federici** (1988), who argues against the notion that witchcraft was 'the last spark of a dying feudal world' and explains it as a 'bourgeois' phenomenon associated with the transition to capitalism, roughly from 1550 to the end of the 17th cent. – Kirsten **Kramer** (2003) takes a similar approach in her study of **Montaigne**. She associates the European 'W craze' with the beginning of the modern era, particularly the assertion of juridical, theological, and medical knowledge, thus treating the craze as an aspect of those social struggles in which the bourgeois male subject, capable of warding off sensual temptations, is constituted. – English anthropological scholarship, more strongly shaped by cultural theories, both supports and displaces the attribution of certain economic changes and the associated periodisations of the W craze within a society. For example, Alan D.J. **Macfarlane** (1978) views the emergence of the belief in Ws as an effect of cultural clashes between new economic systems (as mediated, for example, through

colonialism). These clashes left in their wake a destruction of familiar ritual conflict strategies that could then be replenished through the construction and persecution of Ws.

Frigga Haug

Bibliography

W. **Benjamin**, 'Theses on the Philosophy of History' (1940), W. Benjamin, *Illuminations*, ed. H. Arendt, transl. H. Zohn, New York 1969.

S. **Bovenschen**, 'Die aktuelle Hexe, die historische Hexe und der Hexenmythos', G. Becker et al. (eds.), *Aus der Zeit der Verzweiflung: Zur Genese und Aktualität des Hexenbildes*, Frankfurt/M 1977, 259–312.

B. **Ehrenreich**, D. **English**, *Hexen, Hebammen und Krankenschwestern*, Munich 1975, 15th edn. 1992.

S. **Federici**, 'The Great Witch-Hunt', *The Maine Scholar*, vol. 1, 1988, no. 1, 31–52.

F. **Hervé**, *Geschichte der deutschen Frauenbewegung* (1982), 7th edn., Cologne 2001.

C. **Honegger** (ed.), *Die Hexen der Neuzeit: Studien zur Sozialgeschichte eines kulturellen Deutungsmusters*, Frankfurt/M 1978.

K. **Kramer**, 'Performing the Demonic: Witchcraft, Skepticism and Gender Constructions in Michel de Montaigne's "De la force de l'imagination" and "Des Boyteux"', Cologne 2003, http://www.genderforum.uni-koeln.de.

A.D.J. **Macfarlane**, 'Anthropologische Interpretationen des Hexenwesens', Honegger 1978, 235–55 (German translation of A.D.J. Macfarlane, *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England*, London 1970, 240–53).

J. **Michelet**, *Satanism and Witchcraft* (1862), transl. A.R. Allinson, New York 1992.

11. *Recent witchcraft research*. – In Anglophone countries in particular, a number of assumptions made by feminist witchcraft research were questioned from the mid-1970s on. While taking a feminist perspective herself, Christina **Larner** criticises **Ehrenreich** and **English**'s assumption that there was a close link between the W-hunt and the destruction of traditional female medicine by the modern medical profession: 'The main usurpation of midwifery by males took place in the 18th century after the W-hunt was over' (1981, 101). **Larner** argues that while the male medical profession did profit from the oppression of female healers, it cannot be held responsible for the W-hunts. According to Larner, witchcraft was not 'gender-specific' but 'gender-related' (92). While the W was clearly stereotyped as female, the same cannot be said for the persecution of Ws. While more than 80 % of Ws were women, the evil they represented was not

directly ascribed to them as women. Unlike the devil himself, for example, who is male. 'W-hunting was directed for ideological reasons against the enemies of God' (92). But this fails to take into account that ideological convictions of this kind regularly 'claim that they come from up high, from "above"' (**PIT** 1979, 189).

The significant up-tick in historical research from the 1970s onwards increasingly allowed for a more accurate image of the origins of the W stereotype or the W-hunts to be created. This involved, among other things, questioning the significance of the *Malleus Maleficarum*. H.C. Erik **Midelfort** emphasises that the *Malleus Maleficarum* cannot be considered 'the final synthesis of witchcraft theory': 'In its own day it was never accorded the unquestioned authority that modern scholars have sometimes given it [...]; its peculiar savage misogyny and its obsession with impotence were never fully accepted' (2002, 116). – Norman **Cohn** (1975) and Richard **Kieckhefer** (1976) have produced widely accepted chronologies of the early W-hunts (included in **Brackert** 1977) and refuted longstanding myths about an alleged pagan W cult during the Middle Ages (cf. **Oldridge** 2002, 22 et sq.). **Cohn** concludes that the essential elements of the stereotype of the W were fully developed and sanctioned by the church at the beginning of the 15th cent. He emphasises that the trials conducted in the French and Swiss Alps in the course of the persecution of the Waldensians were significant for developing the W stereotype; in these trials, it was no longer just heresy, but the new crime of diabolical sorcery that was brought to the forefront (1993, 202 et sqq.). The representations of the sabbath, nocturnal flights, and demonic creatures found in the W literature of the 16th and 17th cent.s are themselves not literarily attested, according to Cohn, but rather can be traced back to the court records. The "evidence" resulted from the fact 'that some people really believed themselves to fly at night, and that some women believed themselves to copulate at night with incubi. The rest came from the imagination of certain inquisitors, bishops and magistrates' (210). – **Kieckhefer**, who has examined the late medieval precursors of the early modern W hunts, views the period from 1435 until 1500 – particularly the intense waves of persecution from 1455 until 1460 and from 1480 until 1485 – as foreshadowing the major W-hunts of the 16th and 17th cent.s. Many trials from this period already display the typical element of the later persecutions, such as the devil's pact (1976, 23 et sqq.).

Regional case studies demonstrate the variety and asynchronicity of the W-hunts. What is important is the distinction between the centre and periphery, the cultural penetration of large parts of Europe in the course of Christianisation and the formation of nation states. Gustav **Henningsen** and Bengt **Ankerloo** summarise the consensus in scholarship as follows: 'The maleficium conflict between neighbours at village level was reinterpreted and "diabolized"

by the Catholic inquisitors, the Protestant pastors, and the bureaucratic élite created everywhere by the emerging national states [...]. An élite with an international network of communications and control over churches, courts of law, and schools, made use of this control to persuade the peasants to change their superstitious or otherwise offensive behaviour and to learn reason and order' (1990, 10). Taking this as a starting point, it has been possible to demonstrate that there were regionally diverse forms of cultural homogenisation at play within the building of the church's hegemony and the early modern state.

Carlo **Ginzburg** already pursued comparable questions in his 1966 study of Inquisition records from the Italian region of Friuli. He discovered a pagan cult that was transformed, due to the Inquisition's intervention, in a manner that accorded with the stereotype of the W. Interrogated by the inquisitors on the basis of reports of trance-like sleepwalking and encounters with the dead, the interviewees attributed their extraordinary powers to the fact 'that they were born with a caul. The inquisitors, having overcome their first astonishment, tried to make the *benandanti* confess that they were sorcerers and had taken part in a Ws' sabbath. Under this pressure the *benandanti* altered their story by degrees so that eventually – but more than fifty years later – it conformed to the stereotype of the sabbath' (2002, 122).

Dagmar Engelken

Bibliography

H. **Brackert**, 'Daten und Materialien zur Hexenverfolgung', G. Becker et al. (ed.), *Aus der Zeit der Verzweiflung: Zur Genese und Aktualität des Hexenbildes*, Frankfurt/M 1977, 313–440.

N. **Cohn**, *Europe's Inner Demons: The Demonization of Christians in Medieval Christendom* (1975), London 1993.

B. **Ehrenreich**, D. **English**, *Hexen, Hebammen und Krankenschwestern*, Munich 1975, 15th edn., 1992.

C. **Ginzburg**, *The Night Battles: Witchcraft & Agrarian Cults in the Sixteenth & Seventeenth Centuries* (1966), London 1983.

C. **Ginzburg**, 'Deciphering the Sabbath', Oldridge 2002, 120–8.

G. **Henningsen**, B. **Ankerloo**, 'Introduction', G. Henningsen, B. Ankerloo, (eds.), *Early Modern European Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries*, Oxford 1990, 1–15.

R. **Kieckhefer**, *European Witch Trials: Their Foundations in Popular and Learned Culture, 1300–1500*, London 1976.

C. **Larner**, *Enemies of God: The Witch-hunt in Scotland*, London 1981.

H.C.E. **Midelfort**, 'Heartland of the Witchcraze', Oldridge 2002, 113–19.
D. **Oldridge** (ed.), *The Witchcraft Reader*, London 2002.
PIT (Projekt Ideologie-Theorie), *Theorien über Ideologie*, Berlin/W 1979.

III. Since the 1970s in particular, there has been examination of the social tensions, overlaid by radical-religious discourses, that surrounded the W trials. These tensions represented a threat to the secular and religious political authorities. According to Marvin **Harris** (1974), witchcraft was not so much an expression of popular discontent as 'largely an invention of the ruling classes, who retained the W craze for the purpose of repressing the rising Christian messianism [...]. The practical purpose [...] was [...] to displace responsibility for the crisis of late medieval society from the church and the state to imaginary beings in human form' (1993, 225, 237). – It was in this sense that, one decade earlier, Julio **Caro Baroja** (1961) had already noted that, at least in the Basque Country, the investigations against Ws and the intervention of the Inquisition Court were often initiated by local notables. This involved recurrent attempts at insurrection against the Inquisitors, which, according to Caro Baroja, is evidence both of the unpopularity of the W trials among the people and of the climate of confrontation within which they occurred. From this perspective, the large-scale repression of witchcraft is identified as the result of a political strategy: Encouraged by pulpit preachers obedient to the authorities and promoted by threats of punishment against those refusing to engage in denunciation, the W trials diverted attention from those responsible at a time of severe crises and uprisings and focused it on the poorest and most exposed segments of the population. And yet it remains an open question why the majority of Ws were women, that is, why belief in Ws was oriented, within the social imaginary, toward the female sex.

The lead of male misogyny takes one a long way back. In **Hesiod**'s *Theogony*, woman is given to man in retaliation for the Promethean fire theft, as a seductive instance of the bad. The Pythagorean table of principles reported by **Aristotle**, with its normative listing of binary opposites (*Metaph*, 986 a 25 et sq.), also suggests an identification of 'female', 'dark' and 'bad'. But this is by no means attested in all cultures, nor is it consistently true in a dominantly misogynistic culture. Rather, the magical powers of women are in many places an object of veneration.

If the (ambivalent) devaluation of the feminine runs through the entire history of patriarchy, the same is not true of the disdain for witchcraft or sorcery. In ancient writers, the world of magic is the world of the *wish*, i.e. a world in which stating a wish leads to its fulfilment, provided it is accompanied by spells, invocations, instruments, chants and other rituals. In ancient Rome, much the same

is reported about the extraordinary abilities of sorceresses as would later be said about Ws: they can fly, brew magic potions, pronounce incantations, influence illness, healing, romantic matters, etc. It was only in the course of time that a complex doctrine developed within the Christian world, one that postulated a fluent transition from sorcery to the devil's pact. During the High Middle Ages, witchcraft was still considered a continuation of pagan rites without any claim to practical efficacy, but in the 12th and 13th cent.s, the view asserted itself that magical powers are the result of a pact with the devil, and thereby a challenge to divine omnipotence. This was how witchcraft found itself within the same category as the most common heresies of the time: the Cathars, Fraticelli, and others. In this context, it is significant that **Thomas Aquinas** insists on the reality of demons and refuses to reject witcheries as mere dreams or delusions, since the "realistic" view is likely to increase the cruelty of persecution. 'Fides vero catholica vult quod daemones sint aliquid, et possint nocere suis operationibus' (*Quodlibet*, XI, 10, in: *Opera omnia*, 15, ed. S.E. **Fretté**, Paris 1875, 38).

Within the worldview of the learned W hunters of the early modern period, religious rites were responsible for good and magic rites for evil. The religion associated with "good" rituals was dominated by men, while women outnumbered men in the rituals that brought disaster; here, desire was associated with sexuality and even reduced to it.

In fact, the most striking feature of the indictments, testimonies, and confessions of defendants in W trials is the constantly recurring accusation of shameless behaviour, of perverted and rampant sexuality. Women were commonly accused of sexual intercourse with the devil and all manner of debauchery, both among each other and in league with the devil, as well as of abducting children and adolescents, particularly girls. These insinuations were justified by reference to women's "excessive sex drive", i.e. by recourse to the old belief in the proximity of female sexuality to dark forces, by virtue of which Ws could go about their wicked work and cause, for example, infant death, plagues and animal diseases, crop failures and other natural disasters. Thus, talk of the sexuality of the Ws perpetuates the myth of the sexual insatiability of women, which the androcentric discourse presents as the root of all evil (for men).

This attitude sought and found support in the Bible, in pagan authors and in the church fathers (cf. **Caro Baroja** 1961, 99). Caro Baroja cites a text by Fray **Martín de Castañega**, an entire chapter of which is devoted to the question of why there are more women than men among the devil's servants. The simple answer is that woman is the very epitome of depravity, and all the more so the poorer and older she is (195). This describes the manner in which the Inquisitors continued the long history of medieval misogyny. It was upon such testimonies that an interpretation of misogyny that traces man's fear of women

back to the fear of the unknown, and whose motives range from the idea of the "vagina dentata" (**Poe**) to the "Circe complex", could build.

During the 20th cent., there emerged explanation attempts of a psychoanalytical nature that concentrated either on man and his fear of castration and/or the all-consuming mother, or on woman, whose W craze was interpreted as the result of a projection through which a woman's own, repressed sexual desires are projected onto another woman (the "W") in a manner analogous to the 'hostility against the mother' reminiscent of the Oedipus complex (**Bovenschen** 1977, 271). Yet Bovenschen rightly points out the limits of such individual-psychological attempts at explaining social problems on the scale of the W-hunts.

Aside from misogyny, feminist theorists have directed their attention to the temporal proximity of the W craze and the beginnings of modern science. Modern science, they argue, no longer conceives of the act of cognition as something analogous to the creative act of giving birth, but rather an act of subjugation in which the resistance of the object, i.e. nature, must be broken. Conversely, Evelyn Fox **Keller** has emphasised that nature 'emerges as pure machine only after the belief in witchcraft subsides' (1985, 126, n. 11). If the assertion of the affinity of woman and nature peaks during the W craze, modern science sanctions their complete separation.

On the colonial W. – Comparison with events in the American colonies can further illustrate the dynamics of the W trials. Before the arrival of the Spaniards, practices of magic and sorcery were part of the indigenous religion in the Andean highlands, but the Spanish conquerors' notion of the devil was unknown, since the cosmos was understood as an order of interrelated, balanced forces and complementary principles. It was only the Catholic clerics arriving in Peru who interpreted the indigenous population's religion, its worship of the earth, the sun or trees, as a superstition introduced by the devil, on the basis of their own demonology. '[T]he first Spanish administrators and clerics interpreted pre-Columbian religion according to alien concepts, creating Ws where none had existed before' (**Silverblatt** 1987, 174).

The records of the W trials in the New World tell the same story as their European counterparts. Again, most of the accused women were poor, and again, the rebellion against authority, now colonial authority, was placed in the rubric of "witchcraft". According to the Spanish clergy, the most dangerous Ws were poor, elderly "native women" who had some knowledge of medicinal herbs and enjoyed a certain prestige in their communities. The discourse of the inquisitors was characterised by a blend of arrogance and extreme ignorance, and this was all the more true the greater their literacy and vanity. Textual references replaced critical, rational assessment of the facts of the case (however

tentative); to this was added, in cases such as those of the Basque country or Peru, a complete ignorance of the local language, and of local customs and peculiarities. The way the trials were conducted – preliminary arrest, torture, confession, medical examination of the victim for devil's marks, dismissal of any revocation of the confession, creation of a criminal record, etc. – meant the outcome lacked any probative value, and prior convictions were the rule. The accused was treated as guilty from the outset. Denunciation produced ever new effects, while the judiciary insisted on maintaining its accusations regardless of the progress and developments of the proceedings.

If a Peruvian "W" confessed, during interrogation, to having deployed certain magical arts in reaction to humiliations by the conquerors, and if her threats then came true (by whatever coincidence), she became a symbol of resistance to her compatriots. However, conscious efforts to preserve the old religion, whose practice had been forbidden by the Spaniards, were only undertaken relatively late. Thus, the W trials were a means to secure the power of the conquerors and validate the Catholic religion.

When, in time, there emerged a rudimentary conception of the devil, it differed fundamentally from the European one. Appropriating and inverting European discourse, women portrayed the devil *as a Spanish colonial lord who appeared to them in shimmering armour*. It is in this image that evil in the form of the master finds its way into the indigenous cosmogony.

Montserrat Galcerán
All parts of the article translated by Max Henninger

Bibliography

J. **Blázquez Miguel**, *Madrid, judíos, herejes y brujas: el Tribunal de Corte (1650–1820)*, Toledo 1990.

S. **Bovenschen**, 'Die aktuelle Hexe, die historische Hexe und der Hexenmythos', G. Becker et al. (eds.), *Aus der Zeit der Verzweiflung: Zur Genese und Aktualität des Hexenbildes*, Frankfurt/M 1977, 259–312.

J. **Caro Baroja**, *Las brujas y su mundo*, Madrid 1961 (Engl.: *The World of the Witches*, London 1964).

M. **Harris**, *Cows, Pigs, Wars and Witches: The Riddles of Culture*, New York 1974.

E.F. **Keller**, *Reflections on Gender and Science*, New Haven 1985.

I. **Silverblatt**, *Moon, Sun, and Witches: Gender Ideologies and Class in Inca and Colonial Peru*, Princeton 1987 (S: *Luna, sol y brujas: Género y clases en los Andes pre-hispánicos y coloniales*, Archivos de historia andina 10, Cuzco 1990).

→ anarchism, anxiety/fear, common sense, consciousness, despair, domination of nature, enlightenment, fairy tale, feminism, goddess, history, image, imaginary, liberation, magic, May Day, myth, periodisation of history, psychoanalysis, remembrance, researching of everyday life, resistance, sexuality, violence/power, witch hunt, women's movement

→ Alltagsforschung, Alltagsverstand, Anarchismus, Angst/Furcht, Aufklärung, Befreiung, Bewusstsein, Bild, Erinnerung, Erster Mai, Feminismus, Frauenbewegung, Hexenverfolgung, Geschichte, Gewalt, Göttin, Imaginäres, Magie, Märchen, Mythos, Naturbeherrschung, Periodisierung der Geschichte, Psychoanalyse, Sexualität, Verzweiflung, Widerstand

CHAPTER 39

Witch Hunt

A: mulāḥaqa as-sāḥirāt. – F: chasse aux sorcières. – G: Hexenverfolgung. – R: gonenie za ved'mami, presledovanie koldunij. – S: caza de brujas. – C: liè wū 猎巫

Belief in witches seems universal. Closely linked to a cosmology which is also populated by spirits and supernatural magical powers, the belief in witches and black magic was for a long time an integral part of the life experience and worldview of most people. Still, nowhere else it has had such disastrous consequences and claimed as many victims as in Western Europe, especially in the small principalities of the Old Empire, where, between 1450 and 1650, the fear of harmful witches, bolstered by near insuperable economic crises and epidemics, led to the systematic persecution and execution of almost 60,000 witches and sorcerers. Like other persecutions, this one, too, has attracted the special interest of Marxist research, just as the link between W and the imposition of modern bourgeois patriarchal domination of women has attracted the interest of feminist research.

1. There had been isolated convictions for witchcraft – or, more precisely: for the casting of dangerous spells – in the past. But from about the end of the 15th cent. onward, witches were considered to be 'persons, primarily of the female sex, who had first made a pact with the devil, in order to use him to inflict damage of all kinds to life and limb, to property, to pets, or to seeds and fruits with the help of various magical means; […] [who] took part in the nocturnal Sabbath presided over by the devil, worshipped the devil who appeared in the flesh, and boldly denied and shamefully mocked Christ, the Church, and the sacrament; people who […], with devilish help, moved in rapid flight through the air, made themselves culpable of sexually debauched acts, engaged in them amongst themselves and with the devil, forming a large heretical sect; […] for whom it was easy to transform themselves into animals, namely into wolves, cats or mice, and to appear in this form to their fellow men' – as the celebrated scholar of witchcraft Joseph **Hansen** put it around 1900, basing his argument on the so-called *Malleus Maleficarum*, a 1487 book by the south German inquisitor Heinrich **Institor** (repr. 1998, 21), a Dominican friar. This 'witch-hunter's manual' systematised for the first time all informations about a putative new sect, said to be more terrible than all those hitherto known. This sect, it was

© BERLINER INSTITUT FÜR KRITISCHE THEORIE E.V., 2026 | DOI:10.1163/9789004754966_040
This is an open access chapter distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

claimed, aimed to systematically destroy Christendom and needed therefore to be combated by all means. To this end, the inquisitor recommended to render court proceedings more severe so as to ensure that no suspect could escape judgement; with or without the use of torture, all the accused should be made to confess, whereupon they could be brought to death. More still: they should divulge their companions at the 'witches' dance', i.e. to reveal the names of their accomplices, thus helping to subject them also to criminal procedure.

This procedure followed the traditional methods of investigation used by the inquisition (which had been in the hands of the Dominicans since the high Middle Ages). What was new, however, was that secular courts should now also employ these methods, in accordance with **Institor**'s definition of witchcraft as a 'mixed' crime: apostasy from god and worship of the devil were considered a spiritual mortal sin, whereas harming or even killing humans and animals, something that had already been considered a punishable act in the past, was a secular mortal crime.

As a result, Ws occurred, at first sporadically, then more and more systematically – in the French-Swiss borderlands, then in the German-Swiss Alpine region, where the persecution of witches blended with the persecution of heretics (the German word for witch, *Hexe*, may originate in the word for heretic, *Ketzer*). From there, the witch craze travelled up the Rhine to northern Germany, the Netherlands, the British Isles, and Scandinavia; from central Germany it reached Prussia, Poland, and finally the Habsburg territories, where, in Hungary and Romania, the witches and sorcerers turned into werewolves and finally into vampires. There were differences in the practice and intensity of persecution; as a rule, the persecutions were most severe in the Catholic territories, where secular and spiritual power were unified in one person, such as the archbishop of Trier or the Franconian bishops of Würzburg and Bamberg. However, theologians of all denominations agreed, in the 16th cent., that the power of the devil was excessive and that the activities of his followers must be stopped at any cost. In Europe, tens of thousands fell victim to this craze – and most victims were indeed female, as *Malleus Maleficarum* had already claimed. In the book, women are considered to be at greater risk of succumbing to the devil's seductions, both because the 'daughters of Eve' were considered as weaker in faith, and because women were thought to be so lustful and hungry for power that they were willing to make use of any and all means to satisfy their urges.

But it were not only deluded inquisitors, powerful bishops, and misogynous secular judges who mercilessly persecuted suspects of witchcraft. Rather, they could count on the urban and rural populations who mostly shared their fears. As a result of the intensification of the W, which was usually accom-

panied by propaganda (pamphlets, sermons, calls to denounce suspects, questioning of broad sections of the population, public readings of the convicted witches' confessions, public executions, etc.), the misogynous ideas of the *Malleus Maleficarum* and other demonological treatises gained an ever stronger foothold in the broader population. Around 1650, the belief in witches had become so strongly rooted that one not only scared children by telling them about the "evil women", i.e. witches, but also believed those children when they narrated their own experiences with the devil at his "Sabbath". Still, from the middle of the 17th cent. onward, there was growing scepticism and debate, especially among learned upper class men, about the supposed evil activities of the devil and those "little old women" allegedly in thrall to him because of their raging lust. Consequently, in many areas (such as the traditionally tolerant United Netherlands, France, and Sweden), attempts to put an end to the witch craze by order of the government were already being made around 1600. But in the Old German Reich, which was fractured by different religious denominations and riven by the Thirty Years' War, the belief in witches and the zeal with which they were persecuted persisted, as they did in Switzerland and some other parts of Central Europe. There were still a number of witch trials and executions during the 18th cent.; the last two occurred in 1775, in catholic Bavaria, more precisely in Kempten in Allgäu, and in 1782, in the protestant city state of Glarus. However, these were no longer mass trials, and they provoked highly indignant remarks from enlightened observers all over Europe. For example, Christian **Thomasius**, a legal scholar from Halle, expressed fundamental doubt, at the beginning of the 18th cent., as to whether a person could acquire supernatural powers by means of a devil's pact. Although witch trials now became rarer even in the territories of the Old German Reich, the crime of witchcraft did not disappear from the criminal codes until the mid-19th cent., along with the use of torture in criminal proceedings.

2. Later research on witches and W is widely inspired by Marxist theory of history and its interest in the working class and the oppressed. Such considerations already resonate in Jules **Michelet**'s romanticising interpretation of the witch as a 'wise woman' and 'people's doctor' in rural areas, which was then taken up in early research on popular culture in the 19th cent. At the same time, attention was deflected from the authorities and elites, in whom the persecution critics of the Enlightenment and the most prominent W researchers of the 19th cent. (such as **Soldan** in 1843 and **Hansen** in 1900) had taken a particular interest, and redirected to the cultural context in which witches lived and worked – although the manner in which this occurred was often problematic.

In extreme cases such as that of Nazi Germany, the witch was reinterpreted and idealised as a fighter against the "Roman church" and culture, for the sake of Germanic folk culture.

In more recent Marxist debates, especially in the Frankfurt School, where psychoanalytic influences played a major role, the witch has occasionally been referred to, e.g. by **Horkheimer** and **Adorno**. As during the Enlightenment, the W is perceived as an expression of the Christian churches' claims to power. What is new is the reference to the churches' hostility to the body and to sensuality, as well as to women. 'Christianity's attempt to compensate the suppression of sexuality ideologically by the veneration of woman [...] is annulled by its rancor against the woman thus elevated [...]. The affect which corresponds to the practice of oppression is contempt, not veneration, and lurking behind the love of one's neighbor throughout the Christian centuries has been the forbidden, compulsive hatred of the object which continually brought to mind the futility of that exertion: woman. Women paid for the cult of the Madonna with the obsessive belief in witches, the revenge taken on the memory of the pre-Christian prophetess who secretly called into question the sanctified patriarchal system of power. The woman excites the savage rage of the half-converted man [...]' (*DE*, 87).

At about the same time, the French Annales School was also inspired by Marxism, and the subject of witchcraft and the W attracted considerable interest within their "history of mentalities", especially in the work of Jean **Delumeau**. Following Lucien **Febvre** and Robert **Mandrou**, **Delumeau** interprets the belief in witches and the W as an integral part of a crisis both of Christian consciousness and of the political systems of Western Europe since the end of the Middle Ages. He relates the belief in witches, which he considers a major misogynistic move, to anti-Jewish and anti-Muslim tendencies in the European culture of the early modern period and sees the Church as a major force behind the fears of the devil and the witches that were used to govern the simple folk. More closely oriented to Marxist thought, British social historian Keith **Thomas** initiated the most significant paradigm shift in modern research by proposing to define witchcraft and witch-hunting in terms of concrete economic and social conditions – specifically, in terms of the transition from the medieval to the early modern (and then capitalist) mode of production and the resulting impoverishment of the peasant (particularly the female peasant) population. He starts from the premise that within this context, the fear of witches was 'functional' in the sense that it helped people 'personify' their fears and exorcise them through persecution: 'Witch-beliefs are therefore of interest to the social historian for the light they throw upon the weak points in the social structure of the time. [...] The tensions which such accusations

usually reflected arose from the position of the poor and dependent members of the community. […] The great bulk of witchcraft accusations thus reflected an unresolved conflict between the neighbourly conduct required by the ethical code of the old village community, and the increasingly individualistic forms of behaviour which accompanied the economic changes of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries' (1991, 970 et sq., quoted in **Honegger** 1978, 288 et sq.).

Although no early capitalist production and living conditions comparable to those in England can be found in the territories of the Old German Empire around 1600, early 21st-cent. socio-historical researchers assume that there existed economic and social crisis phenomena which, in the wake of climatic changes during the late 16th and the 17th cent.s, triggered or decisively motivated the fear of witches there as well. The so-called 'Little Ice Age' (**Ladurie** 1977) plays a notably important role in this context: Due to unpredictable fluctuations in weather conditions (particularly hard winters followed by cold, wet summers) harvests deteriorated, resulting in higher prices (especially for bread cereals) and increasing poverty and hunger. This severely aggravated the nutritional situation of the majority of the population and encouraged the spread of epidemics (cf. **Abel** 1974; **Kamen** 1971; **Behringer** 2002).

3. Although there has been no doubt, since the publication of *Malleus Maleficarum*, that witches are females, the gender aspects of the belief in witches and the W remained "terra incognita" for a long time. It was only the feminist scholars of the Women's Movement of the 1970s who raised important new questions in this regard. In particular, the group around Helmut **Brackert** and Silvia **Bovenschen**, which formulated their arguments from positions proximate to Critical Theory, systematically addressed the aspect of the struggle between the sexes in the context of the W, as did the cultural sociologist Claudia **Honegger**. Building on works from French history of mentalities and English social history, Honegger argued that there was a connection between the process of modernisation and the emergence of capitalism on the one hand, and the W and the domestication of women on the other (1978, 24). **Bovenschen** emphasised the twofold character of the witch as 'subject of the appropriation of nature and object of the control of nature': 'Women have always represented nature […]. An unholy alliance – thus thought the church; a regressive alliance – thus it might have seemed to the rationalists, the "demythologizers of the world". In later periods, when man hoped to have permanently banned the magical-divine power of women and burned at the stake the chthonian Mana along with female divine power, domination and utilization of nature always implied domination of human beings by human beings […]. The new

rationality established itself at the expense of an increased distance between humans and nature, and thereby between parts of humans themselves. This ambivalence, which lies at the heart of progress made towards the domination of nature, still determines the image of woman today; she shares in part the fate of enslaved nature' (1978, 94).

Still, more recent feminist studies (e.g. **Ahrendt-Schulte** 1994) show that many of these interpretations cannot be verified on the microhistorical level. Women suspected of being witches were not always poor and marginalised victims of the capitalisation process, as claimed by Keith **Thomas**, but also "strong" women, who fought for their physical and social well-being in times of crisis. As such, they were (or became) incompatible with the ideology and rules of early modern patriarchal society.

At the same time, more recent research has refuted the Romantic notion that the majority of women condemned as witches were "wise women" and "healers or midwives", systematically persecuted by representatives of the church and the medical profession. Such mono-causal explanations of the W have been comprehensively refuted by modern scholarship (see **Labouvie** 1991). But the fact that women in particular were denounced as witches (although some thousand men fell victim to the W as well) remains in need of explanation. According to Brian **Levack** (1995, 133), women accounted for between 95 % (e.g. in England) and 45 % (e.g. in the early witch trials in the Bernese territory in Switzerland) of those condemned for witchcraft.

Thus, although there must be a direct link between Ws and the process of state formation, the emergence of early modern capitalism and the dissolution of older ideologies and social practices since the 15th cent., research should henceforth focus more strongly on gender-specific preconditions and their consequences for the "order of the sexes".

Claudia Opitz
Translated by Max Henninger

Bibliography

W. **Abel**, *Massenarmut und Hungerkrisen im vorindustriellen Europa: Versuch einer Synopsis*, Hamburg-Berlin/W 1974.

I. **Ahrendt-Schulte**, *Weise Frauen – böse Weiber: Die Geschichte der Hexen in der Frühen Neuzeit*, Freiburg/Br 1994.

I. **Ahrendt-Schulte**, *Zauberinnen in der Stadt Horn (1554–1603): Magische Kultur und Hexenverfolgung in der Frühen Neuzeit*, Frankfurt/M 1997.

G. **Becker** et al., *Aus der Zeit der Verzweiflung: Zur Genese und Aktualität des Hexenbildes*, Frankfurt/M 1978.

W. **Behringer**, 'Zur Geschichte der Hexenforschung', *Hexen und Hexenverfolgung im deutschen Südwesten*, ed. S. Lorenz, exhibition catalog of the Badisches Landesmuseum Karlsruhe – volume of essays, Ostfildern 1994, 93–146.

W. **Behringer** (ed.), *Hexen und Hexenprozesse*, Munich 2002.

S. **Bovenschen** et al., 'The Contemporary Witch, the Historical Witch and the Witch Myth: The Witch, Subject of the Appropriation of Nature and Object of the Domination of Nature', *New German Critique*, vol. 15, 1978, 82–119.

J. **Delumeau**, *La peur en occident: XIVe–XVIIe siècles*, Paris 1978.

L. **Febvre**, 'Sorcellerie: Sottise ou révolution mentale?', *Annales: Économies, Société, Civilisations* 3, 1948, 9–15.

J. **Hansen**, *Zauberwahn, Inquisition und Hexenprozeß im Mittelalter und die Entstehung der großen Hexenverfolgung*, Munich-Leipzig 1900 (repr. Frankfurt/M 1998).

C. **Honegger** (ed.), *Schrift und Materie der Geschichte: Vorschläge zur systematischen Aneignung historischer Prozesse*, Frankfurt/M 1977.

C. **Honegger** (ed.), *Die Hexen der Neuzeit: Studien zur Sozialgeschichte eines kulturellen Deutungsmusters*, Frankfurt/M 1978.

H. **Kamen**, *The Iron Century: Social Change in Europe 1550–1650*, London 1971.

H. **Kramer** (**Institor**), *The Hammer of Witches: A Complete Translation of the Malleus Maleficarum*, transl. C.S. Mackay, Cambridge 2009.

E. **Labouvie**, *Zauberei und Hexenwerk: Ländlicher Hexenglauben in der frühen Neuzeit*, Frankfurt/M 1991.

E.L. **Ladurie**, 'Die Geschichte von Sonnenschein und Regenwetter', Honegger 1977, 220–47.

B. **Levack**, *Hexenjagd: Die Geschichte der Hexenverfolgungen in Europa*, Munich 1995.

R. **Mandrou**, *Magistrats et sorciers en France au XVIIe siècle: Une analyse de psychologie historique*, Paris 1968.

J. **Michelet**, *La sorcière: The witch of the Middle Ages*, transl. L.J. Trotter, London 1863.

W.G. **Soldan**, *Geschichte der Hexenprozesse*, Stuttgart-Tübingen 1843.

K. **Thomas**, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (1971), Harmondsworth 1991 (an excerpt translated into German as 'Die Hexen und ihre soziale Umwelt' can be found in: Honegger 1978, 256–308).

C. **Thomasius**, *Vom Laster der Zauberei* (*1701*) / *Über die Hexenprozesse* (*1712*), Munich 1986.

→ anxiety/fear, common sense, consciousness, economic crisis, Enlightenment, feminism, Frankfurt School, gender relations, genesis of the state, history, image, liberation, periodisation of history, progress, remembrance, researching

of everyday life, resistance, sexuality, victim, violence/power, witch, women's movement

→ Alltagsforschung, Alltagsverstand, Angst/Furcht, Aufklärung, Befreiung, Bewusstsein, Bild, Erinnerung, Feminismus, Fortschritt, Frankfurter Schule, Frauenbe- wegung, Geschichte, Geschlechterverhältnisse, Gewalt, Hexe, Opfer, Periodisierung der Geschichte, Sexualität, Staatsentstehung, Widerstand, Wirtschaftskrise

References to the Original Publications

Agrarian Question, by Theodor Bergmann: originally published as *Agrarfrage* in: HKWM, vol. 1: *Abbau des Staates bis Avantgarde*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 1994, col. 75–82.

Black Marxism, by Hans Gustav Klaus: originally published as *Black Marxism* in: HKWM, vol. 2: *Bank bis Dummheit in der Musik*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 1995, col. 257–261.

Capital-*Editions*, by Thomas Marxhausen: originally published as Kapital-*Editionen* in: HKWM, vol. 7/I: *Kaderpartei bis Klonen*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Frigga Haug, Peter Jehle, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 2008, col. 136–160.

Class Struggle, by Colin Barker (part I), Werner Goldschmidt (part II), Wolfram Adolphi (part III): originally published as *Klassenkampf* (part I transl. Lars Stubbe) in: HKWM, vol. 7/I: *Kaderpartei bis Klonen*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Frigga Haug, Peter Jehle, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 2008, col. 836–873.

Climate Politics, by Oliver Walkenhorst: originally published as *Klimapolitik* in: HKWM, vol. 7/I: *Kaderpartei bis Klonen*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Frigga Haug, Peter Jehle, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 2008, col. 1035–1056.

Colonial Mode of Production, by Bastiaan Wielenga: originally published as *koloniale Produktionsweise* in: HKWM, vol. 7/II: *Knechtschaft bis Krise des Marxismus*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Frigga Haug, Peter Jehle, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 2010, col. 1151–1159.

Conjuncture, Politico-historical, by Juha Koivisto and Mikko Lahtinen: originally published as *Konjunktur, politisch-historische* (part I, transl. John Kannankulam) in: HKWM, vol. 7/II: *Knechtschaft bis Krise des Marxismus*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Frigga Haug, Peter Jehle, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 2010, col. 1502–1519.

Critique of Globalisation, by Ulrich Brand: originally published as *Globalisierungskritik* in: HKWM, vol. 5: *Gegenöffentlichkeit bis Hegemonialapparat*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 2001, col. 881–889.

Dependency Theory, by Jan Otto Andersson: originally published as *Dependenztheorie* (transl. Gunter Willing) in: HKWM, vol. 2: *Bank bis Dummheit in der Musik*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 1995, col. 600–606.

Development, by Sven-Eric Liedman, Thomas Marxhausen, and Wolfgang Fritz Haug: originally published as *Entwicklung* in: HKWM, vol. 3: *Ebene bis Extremismus*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 1997, col. 553–567.

Disposable Time, by Volker Gransow, Gunter Willing (part I), Frigga Haug (part II): originally published as *disponible Zeit* in: HKWM, vol. 2: *Bank bis Dummheit in der Musik*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 1995, col. 748–756.

Division of Labour, by Frigga Haug: originally published as *Arbeitsteilung* in: HKWM, vol. 1: *Abbau des Staates bis Avantgarde*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 1994, col. 565–582.

Eurocentrism, by Gunter Willing: originally published as *Eurozentrismus* in: HKWM, vol. 3: *Ebene bis Extremismus*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 1997, col. 1023–1032.

Everyday, by Peter Jehle: originally published as *Alltag* in: HKWM, vol. 1: *Abbau des Staates bis Avantgarde*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 1994, col. 144–150.

Family Work, Domestic Labour, Housework, by Frigga Haug: originally published as *Familienarbeit, Hausarbeit* in: HKWM, vol. 4: *Fabel bis Gegenmacht*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 1999, col. 118–129.

Fetish Character of the Commodity, by Thomas Marxhausen: originally published as *Fetischcharakter der Ware* in: HKWM, vol. 4: *Fabel bis Gegenmacht*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 1999, col. 343–354.

Free Trade, by Michael Krätke and Gunter Willing: originally published as *Freihandel* in: HKWM, vol. 4: *Fabel bis Gegenmacht*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 1999, col. 927–940.

Gender, by Donna Haraway (part I) and Andrea Maihofer (part II): originally published as *Geschlecht* (part I transl. Frigga Haug; English original published as *'Gender' for a Marxist Dictionary: The Sexual Politics of a Word* in: *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*, Routledge, New York 1991, pp. 127–148; 241–243) in: HKWM, vol. 5: *Gegenöffentlichkeit bis Hegemonialapparat*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 2001, col. 470–488.

Geopolitics, by Benno Teschke: originally published as *Geopolitik* in: HKWM, vol. 5: *Gegenöffentlichkeit bis Hegemonialapparat*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 2001, col. 322–334.

German Misery, German Wretchedness, by Helmut Peitsch: originally published as *deutsche Misere* in: HKWM, vol. 2: *Bank bis Dummheit in der Musik*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 1995, col. 641–651.

Haitian Revolution, by Sibylle Fischer: originally published as *Haitianische Revolution* in: HKWM, vol. 5: *Gegenöffentlichkeit bis Hegemonialapparat*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 2001, col. 1121–1130.

Hegemonic Apparatus, by Stefan Bollinger and Juha Koivisto: originally published as *Hegemonialapparat* in: HKWM, vol. 5: *Gegenöffentlichkeit bis Hegemonialapparat*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 2001, col. 1258–1270.

Humanity, by Wolfram Adolphi and Victor Strazzeri: originally published as *Menschheit* in: HKWM, vol. 9/I: *Maschinerie bis Mitbestimmung*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Frigga Haug, Peter Jehle, Wolfgang Küttler, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 2018, col. 580–592.

Immaterial Labour, by Wolfgang Fritz Haug: originally published as *immaterielle Arbeit* in: HKWM, vol. 6/I: *Hegemonie bis Imperialismus*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 2004, col. 819–832.

International Relations, by Stephen Gill: originally published as *internationale Beziehungen* (transl. Eric Borg) in: HKWM, vol. 6/II: *Imperium bis Justiz*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 2004, col. 1372–1387.

International Women's Day, by Victor Rego Diaz and Antje Schmitt: originally published as *Internationaler Frauentag* in: HKWM, vol. 6/II: *Imperium bis Justiz*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 2004, col. 1407–1413.

Labour Movement, by Georg Fülberth: originally published as *Arbeiterbewegung* in: HKWM, vol. 1: *Abbau des Staates bis Avantgarde*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 1994, col. 429–442.

Land Reform, by Helmut Arnold: originally published as *Bodenreform* in: HKWM, vol. 2: *Bank bis Dummheit in der Musik*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 1995, col. 275–279.

Materialise / Materialisation, by Wolfgang Fritz Haug: originally published as *materialisieren / Materiatur* in: HKWM, vol. 9/I: *Maschinerie bis Mitbestimmung*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Frigga Haug, Peter Jehle, Wolfgang Küttler, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 2018, col. 138–143.

Materialism, Practical-Dialectical, by Wolfgang Fritz Haug: originally published as *Materialismus, praktisch-dialektischer* in: HKWM, vol. 9/I: *Maschinerie bis Mitbestimmung*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Frigga Haug, Peter Jehle, Wolfgang Küttler, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 2018, col. 216–237.

Memory Work, Effort of Remembering, by Susan Kippax: originally published as *Erinnerungsarbeit* (transl. Valena Momsen) in: HKWM, vol. 3: *Ebene bis Extremismus*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 1997, col. 734–739.

Primary Valorisation, by Christoph Görg: originally published as *Inwertstzung* in: HKWM, vol. 6/II: *Imperium bis Justiz*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 2004, col. 1501–1506.

Putting-Out, Homeworking, Outwork / Telework, by Ursula Huws and Mario Candeias: originally published as *Heimarbeit / Telearbeit* (transl. Stephan Heumann, Frigga Haug) in: HKWM, vol. 6/I: *Hegemonie bis Imperialismus*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 2004, col. 32–45.

Remembrance, by Frigga Haug: originally published as *Erinnerung* in: HKWM, vol. 3: *Ebene bis Extremismus*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 1997, col. 720–733.

Social Formation, by Wolfgang Küttler: originally published as *Gesellschaftsformation* in: HKWM, vol. 5: *Gegenöffentlichkeit bis Hegemonialapparat*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 2001, col. 585–598.

Socially Necessary Labour/Labour Time, by Frigga Haug (part I) and Paresh Chattopad-

hyay (part II): originally published as: *gesellschaftlich notwendige Arbeit / Arbeitszeit* (part II transl. Mario Candeias) in: HKWM, vol. 5: *Gegenöffentlichkeit bis Hegemonialapparat*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 2001, col. 573–585.

Trade, by Mario Candeias and Gerhard Hanappi: originally published as *Handel* in: HKWM, vol. 5: *Gegenöffentlichkeit bis Hegemonialapparat*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 2001, col. 1142–1153.

Witch, by Frigga Haug (part I), Dagmar Engelken (part II), and Montserrat Galcerán (part III): originally published as *Hexe* (part III transl. Katrin Grünepütt) in: HKWM, vol. 6/I: *Hegemonie bis Imperialismus*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 2004, col. 206–218.

Witch Hunt, by Claudia Opitz: originally published as *Hexenverfolgung* in: HKWM, vol. 6/I: *Hegemonie bis Imperialismus*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Argument-Verlag, Hamburg 2004, col. 218–225.

Index of Names

This index includes names of persons mentioned in the articles, excluding bibliographies. Pages in which a name appears only in a title or general designation (such as Anti-Dühring, Theses on Feuerbach, *or Walpurgis Night) are indicated in italics. Derivations like Hegelian, Lutheran, Pythagorean, or Taylorism are not included if they are not directly referring to the person.*

Abel, Wilhelm 476
Abusch, Alexander 267
Adams, Parveen 234
Adelung, Johann Christoph 185
Adorno, Theodor W. 188, 209–210, 266–267, 269, 415, 475
Agarwal, Anil 87
Agnew, John 247
Ahrbeck, Rosemarie 150
Ahrendt-Schulte, Ingrid 477
Aitmatov, Chinghiz 301
Alavi, Hamza 97–100
Albers, Detlev 58, 286
Allen, Sheila 401
Allende, Salvador 59
Almási, Miklós 208
Alnasseri, Sabah 255, 393
Althusser, Louis 41–42, 53, 104–105, 109–113, 116, 146, 207, 286–288, 379, 432
Altvater, Elmar 83, 85, 89–90, 122, 225, 255, 393, 401, 452–453, 455
Álvarez González, Ana Isabel 319
Amin, Samir 97–98, 122, 130–131, 182
Amos, Valerie 233
Anand, Anita 301
Anderson, Perry 281
Ankerloo, Bengt 465
Annenkov, Pavel Vasilyevich 251, 424
Anzaldúa, Gloria 233
Aristotle 149, 159, 165, 307, 410, 467
Arnold, David 99
Arnold, Karl *268*
Arrighi, Giovanni 52
Ashley, Richard K. 247
Assmann, Hugo 211
Assmann, Jan 419
Atatürk, Mustafa Kemal (Pasha) 100
Auernheimer, Georg 181
Aveling, Edward 14, 19, 143–144
Axelrod, Pavel Borisovich 343
Axelrod, Robert Marshall 330
Azzellini, Dario 124

Baade, Fritz 6
Babeuf, Gracchus (François-Noël) 352
Bachofen, Johann Jakob 425
Bachram, Heidi 84, 90
Backhaus, Hans-Georg 14
Bader, Veit M. 51
Bahro, Rudolf 170
Bailyn, Bernard 277
Bakhtin, Mikhail Mikhajlovich 373
Bakunin, Mikhail Alexandrovich 17, 340
Balibar, Étienne 110, 113
Balzac, Honoré 265
Banaji, Jairus 97–99
Bandarage, Asoka 99
Banerjee, Diptendra 96
Baran, Paul A. 130–131
Barbon, Nicholas 306–307
Barrett, Michèle 234
Bartsch, Gerhard 145
Bassin, Mark 248, 250
Bauer, Otto 223, 286
Bay, Hansjörg 384
Beauvoir, Simone de 228, 234
Bebel, August 15, 28, 341
Becker, Gabriele 463
Becker, Johann Philipp 13, 20, 28–29
Becker, Steffen 454
Becker-Schmidt, Regina 171
Beer, Ursula 171
Beethoven, Ludwig van 294
Behrens, Fritz 70
Behringer, Wolfgang 476
Benjamin, Jessica 386
Benjamin, Walter 142, 209, 292, 299, 412–415, 417, 462
Bennholdt-Thomsen, Veronika 101, 199
Benoist, Alain de 122
Bensussan, Gérard X

Bentham, Jeremy 324
Béranger, Pierre Jean de 265
Bergmann, Joachim 63
Bergmann, Theodor 6
Bernhardt, Karl-Heinz 80
Bernstein, Eduard 31, 180, 342, 443, 445
Bethel, Lorraine 233
Bettelheim, Charles 131
Beyme, Klaus von 362
Bidet, Jacques 16, 19
Billig, Michael 384
Bin Talal, El Hassan 89
Bismarck, Otto von 53, 253, *262*, 328, 343
Bisset, Liz 405
Blackbourn, David 267–268
Blackburn, Robin 276
Blair, Tony *115–116*
Blanqui, Louis Auguste 340
Bleier, Ruth 230
Bloch, Ernst 266, 292, 295–296, 300–301, 373, 412–413, 415
Bloch, Joseph 370
Bluntschli, Johann Caspar 249
Bock, Helmut 70–71, 424
Böhm-Bawerk, Eugen von 15, 443
Böhme, Hartmut 203
Boisguilbert, Pierre le Pesant de 203–204
Bolívar, Simón 278
Bollhagen, Peter 429, 432
Bollinger, Stefan 288
Bolte, Friedrich 46
Bolton, Brian 399
Bolz, Norbert 311
Bonaparte, Napoléon 265, 274–275, 281, 332
Booth, David 133
Borchardt, Julian 14
Boris, Dieter 181
Boukman Dutty 274
Bourdieu, Pierre 62–63, 122, 124, 456
Bovenschen, Silvia 460–462, 469, 476
Bowman, Isaiah 247
Bown, Matthew Cullerne 181
Brackert, Helmut 465
Brand, Ulrich 121, 123, 393–395, 456
Brasch, Thomas 267
Braudel, Fernand 189–190, 215, 247, 331
Braun, Volker 162, 166, 170
Brauner-Orthen, Alice 122
Brecht, Bertolt 106, 200, 267, 293–294, 299, 301, 306–307, 363, 373, 416
Brenner, Robert 56, 114
Brenssell, Ariane 122
Brewster, Ben 104
Briegleb, Klaus 416
Bright, Richard 218
Bromley, Simon 255
Brooks, Nick 76
Brosius, Gerhard 169
Brosses, Charles de 203
Brown, Beverley 234
Brown, Marie 400
Brown Weiss, Edith 78
Brunnengräber, Achim 81, 83, 86, 89
Bruno, Giordano 368
Buchanan, James M. 329
Büchner, Ludwig *143*
Buci-Glucksmann, Christine 286, 288
Buck, Daniel 81, 86
Buck-Morss, Susan 300
Buhr, Manfred 363
Bukharin, Nikolai Ivanovich 6, 15, 145
Bull, Hedley 329
Burgio, Alberto 362, 368, 376–377
Butler, Judith 239, 242–243, 384
Byron, George Gordon 265

Cabral, Amílcar 10
Cafiero, Carlo 14
Callinicos, Alex 114
Candeias, Mario 394, 454
Cardoso, Fernando H. 130, 454
Carmichael, Stokely (Kwame Ture) 11
Caro Baroja, Julio 467–468
Carocci, Roberto 362
Carr, Edward Hallett 324
Carrillo, Santiago 287
Castel, Robert 61–62, 189
Castro, Fidel 133
Ceceña, Ana Esther 123
Césaire, Aimé 11, 278
Chambers, Ephraim x
Champetier, Charles 122
Chaplin, Charles Spencer 440
Chatterjee, Choi 318–320
Chen Boda 5
Chesnais, François 126

Childe, Vere Gordon 75
Chodorow, Nancy 232–233
Christensen, Kathleen 403, 405
Christian, Barbara 233
Cixous, Hélène 234
Clarkson, Thomas 276
Clausewitz, Carl von 325
Cobden, Richard 218
Cockburn, Cynthia 169
Cohn, Norman 465
Columbus, Christopher 177
Comer, Lee 400
Comte, Auguste 424
Condorcet, M.J.N. de Caritat, Marquis of 177
Connell, Raewyn 241
Conrad, Judith 171
Corbridge, Stuart 247
Courtivron, Isabelle de 234
Coward, Rosalind 228
Cox, Robert Warburton 254, 331
Crawford, June 385–387
Croce, Benedetto 284–285
Crome, Erhard 59
Cunow, Heinrich 254

D'Alembert, Jean-Baptiste le Rond x, 104
Dahrendorf, Ralf 267
Dales, John 81
Dalla Costa, Mariarosa 155, 170, 192, 199, 400
Damaschke, Adolf 354
Dan, Fyodor Ilyich 343
Danielson, Nikolai (Nikolai-on) 3, 16–18, 23, 28–29, 32, 34
Darwin, Charles 139, 142–144
David, Eduard 4
Davidson, Basil 178
Davis, Angela 233
Davis, David Brion 277
Davydov, Mitrofan Mikhailovich 78
Dawkins, Richard 330
De Angelis, Massimo 393
De Giovanni, Biagio 288, 368–369
de Winter, Anne 400
Deborin, Abram Moiseyevich (Ioffe) 145
Deckstein, Dagmar 305
Delgado Ramos, Gian Carlo 394
Delphy, Christine 234
Delumeau, Jean 475
Demirović, Alex 287
Democrates *136*
Democritus 136, 138, 370
Deng Xiaoping 375
Deppe, Frank 64, 394
Derrida, Jacques 234, 313
Descartes, René 410
Dessalines, Jean-Jacques 275
Destutt de Tracy, Antoine 308
Deville, Gabriel 14
Diderot, Dénis 10, 104, 265
Diehl, Karl 6, 354, 443
Diekmann, Irene 247
Dietrich, Gabriele 155
Dietsche, Petra 177
Dietz, Kristina 81, 90
Dietzgen, Josef 28, 143
Dilke, Charles Wentworth 151
Diner, Dan 246, 250
Diogenes Laertius 77
Djilas, Milovan 70
Dlubek, Rolf 14–15
Domela Nieuwenhuis, Ferdinand 14
Dorsey, Michael K. 82
Dos Santos, Theotônio 130
Dragstedt, Albert 204, 359
Draper, Hal (Harold Dubinsky) 47
Drohla, Hannelore 210
DuBois, W.E.B. 9–11
Duchen, Claire 234
Duden, Barbara 239
Duden, Konrad *460*
Dühring, Eugen 28, 142, *143*, *162*, 168, *325*, *412*
Dulles, Foster Rhea 55
Dunford, Michael F. 455
Durkheim, Émile 159, 165
Dussel, Enrique 181

Ehrenreich, Barbara 461–462, 464
Ehrhardt, Anke 229
Eichhorn (1), Wolfgang 426, 430, 432
Eisler, Hanns 267, 293
Eley, Geoff 267–268
Emmanuel, Arghiri 132, 454
Empedocles 77
Engelberg, Ernst 429

Engels, Friedrich x, xiii, 1–3, 13–21, 23–35, 44–46, 48–49, 51, 53, 61, 75, 105, 130, 136, 138–139, 141–143, 155, 161–164, 168, 170, 178, 186, 192–193, 201, 215, 219–220, 222, 228–229, 231, 250–254, 260–266, 281–282, 292–293, 296–299, 324–328, 333, 339–342, 352–353, 362, 365–370, 376, 412, 423–426, 443, 460
English, Deirdre 461–462, 464
Enzensberger, Hans Magnus 79, 310
Epicurus 111, 370
Erckenbrecht, Ulrich 208
Erion, Graham 81, 84
Escobar, Arturo 301
Escoffier, Jeffrey 231
Ette, Wolfram 208

Faber, Karl-Georg 247–248
Faletto, Enzo 130, 454
Falk, Waltraud 19
Fanon, Frantz 71, 300
Farner, Konrad 52
Faucher, Julius 219
Fausto-Sterling, Anne 230
Febvre, Lucien 475
Federici, Silvia xi, 463
Fetscher, Iring 210
Feuerbach, Ludwig *44*, 204, *208*, *292*, 296, 306, 309, *362–364*, 365–366, *370*, 372, *375*, *377*, *379*, *424*
Feuersenger, Marianne 57
Fichte, Johann Gottlieb 138, 262, 294
Fick, Carolyn E. 278
Fischer, Ernst 267
Flax, Jane 231
Fleming, David 88
Florath, Bernd 431
Förster, Wolfgang 424
Foster, John Bellamy 84, 86
Foster-Carter, Aidan 97, 99
Foucault, Michel 158, 229, 242, 288
Fourier, Charles 150, 162, 167–168, 201, 340
Fraad, Harriet 200
Francioni, Gianni 280, 285
Frank, André Gunder 97, 130–131, 133
Franklin, Benjamin 77, 292, 450
Fretté, Stanislas Édouard 468
Freud, Sigmund 204, 229–230, *239*, *415*, 417–418
Fried, Barbara 230
Friedan, Betty 400, 403
Friedrichs, Günter 58
Fröbel, Folker 59–60
Fromm, Erich 266
Fuchs, Eduard 264
Fukuyama, Francis 330
Furet, François 277
Furtado, Celso 130
Füssel, Kuno 211

Galcerán, Montserrat xi
Garfinkel, Harold 240
Garin, Eugenio 105
Garvey, Marcus 9, 11
Gascoigne, Robert 260
Gault, Unu 387–388
Gauthier, Elisabeth 64
Gauthier, Florence 278
Geiger, Theodor 57
Genovese, Eugene D. 277
George, Jim 247
George, Susan 123
Georges, Karl Ernst 137, 203
Gerold, Gerhard 391
Ghandi, Mohandas Karamchand (Mahatma) 131
Gibson, Katherine (J.K. Gibson-Graham) 122
Giddings, Paula 223
Gildemeister, Regine 239
Gill, Stephen 122, 254, 331, 334–335
Gilligan, Carol 232
Gilpin, Robert 329–330, 453
Ginzburg, Carlo 466
Girschner, Christian 222
Girvan, Norman 131
Glotz, Peter 300
Glyn, Andrew 57, 59
Godelier, Maurice 178
Goethe, Johann Wolfgang 260–262, 264–266
Goffman, Erving 238, 240–241
Goldmann, Monika 403
Goldschmidt, Werner 58
Gömmel, Rainer 216
Gorbachev, Mikhail Sergeyevich 68, 78, 170, 348
Görg, Christoph 393–395, 456

Gorz, André 153
Gossen, Hermann Heinrich 443
Gournay, Jacques Vincent de 216
Grabowsky, Adolf 247
Gracián, Baltasar 211
Graf, Georg Engelbert 254
Graham, Julie (J.K. Gibson-Graham) 122
Gramsci, Antonio 31, 54, 89, 107–109, 112, 115, 125, 180, 186, 188, 280, 282–289, 293, 314, 331, 334–335, 369, 376–379, 401, 420
Gran, Peter 176, 181
Grandjonc, Jacques 424
Gray, Colin S. 247
Grigorovici, Tatiana 444
Grimm, Jacob 185, 294
Grimm, Wilhelm 185, 294
Grossberg, Lawrence 116
Grossmann, Henryk 15, 444–445
Grosz, Elizabeth A. 384
Grün, Karl 105, 260, 264
Guesde, Jules 4
Guicciardini, Francesco 284
Guillaumin, Colette 234
Gunnarsson, Ewa 403
Gurstein, Penny 405
Gutek, Barbara 403
Gutzkow, Karl 260

Habermann, Friederike 122
Habermas, Jürgen 208, 247, 267, 269
Hacking, Ian 417
Hacks, Peter 267
Haeckel, Ernst 248
Haicault, Monique 405
Hakim, Catherine 405
Halbwachs, Maurice 419
Halévy, Daniel 284
Hall, Stuart 115–116, 288, 314
Hampicke, Ulrich 80
Hanappi, Gerhard 452
Hansen, Joseph 472, 474
Haraway, Donna 231
Harding, Sandra 231
Hardt, Michael 255, 305, 311–312
Harich, Wolfgang 80
Hark, Sabine 243
Harris, Marvin 467
Hartmann, Heidi 155, 230
Hartsock, Nancy 231–232
Harvey, David 64, 394–395
Hassel, Christoph 224–225
Hauck, Gerhard 100, 177
Haug, Frigga 155–156, 169, 171, 190, 234, 244, 314, 384–387, 406, 442
Haug, Wolfgang Fritz 1x*n*1, x, 16, 18–19, 26, 40, 60–61, 71, 76, 78, 123, 165, 170, 178, 180, 188–189, 205, 225, 288, 311–313, 356, 363, 366–367, 370, 394, 432, 456–457
Hauser, Kornelia 155–156
Haushofer, Karl 246, 249–250
Hayek, Friedrich August von 329
He Zuorong 375
Hecker, Rolf 21, 25, 27
Heffer, Eric S. 47
Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich 17–18, 26, 138–139, 142, 146, 170–171, 176–177, 260–262, 266, 286, 295, *296*, 306, 308, *339*, 340, 357, 363, 366, 368, 372, 379, 411–412, 416, 424, 427
Heilbroner, Robert 51
Heine, Heinrich 260–261, 264
Heinrich, Michael 14
Heinrichs, Jürgen 59–60
Heinsius, Theodor 185
Heise, Hildegard 171
Heller, Ágnes 151, 187
Helmich, Hans-Joachim 208
Henifin, Mary Sue 230
Henley, Nancy 230
Henn, Alexander 177
Hennessy, Rosemary 243, 402
Hennicke, Peter 86, 91
Henningsen, Gustav 465
Henry of Langenstein 105
Heppener, Sieglinde 210
Heraclitus 357
Herder, Johann Gottfried 137–138, 248
Herodotus *247*
Herrmann, Joachim 426
Hervé, Florence 462
Hesiod 136, 467
Hess, Moses 260
Hess, Rudolf 250
Heyden, Günter 254
Hilferding, Rudolf 15, 222–223, 444, 452
Hillmann, Günther 58
Hinkelammert, Franz Josef 211

Hirsch, Joachim 60, 122, 126, 222, 225, 392, 395, 454
Hirschauer, Stefan 240–241
Hitler, Adolf 248, 266, 346
Hobbes, Thomas 142, 328–329
Hobsbawm, Eric 67, 71, 179, 300, 333, 423, 431–432
Hochschild, Arlie Russell 404
Holland, Stuart 122
Holzkamp, Klaus 292–293, 374, 418
Honegger, Claudia 239, 463, 476
hooks, bell (Gloria Jean Watkins) 233, 240
Hope, Emily 400
Horkheimer, Max 188, 209–210, 415, 475
Horwitz, Jaime 403
House, Tamzy J. 79
Hubbard, Ruth 230
Hübner, Kurt 452–453
Hues, Helga 27
Huffschmid, Anne 125
Hugo, Victor 265
Hugues, Victor 277
Hull, Gloria 233
Hülsmann, Heinz 182
Hume, David 159
Hümmler, Heinz 69–70
Humphrey, Ted 329
Huntington, Samuel Phillips 126, 330
Huws, Ursula 399, 401, 403, 405

Ibn Khaldun 105, 324
Iggers, Georg Gerson 431
Ilyenkov, Evald Vasillievich 373
Irigaray, Luce 234

Jaeck, Hans-Peter 423–424, 429, 431
Jahn, Wolfgang 14
James, C.L.R. 11, 278, 295, 300
James, Selma 400
Jaulin, Annick 376
Jayawardena, Kumari 100
Jellinek, Georg 249
Jessop, Bob 455
Jevons, William Stanley 443
Johansen, Leif 445
John (Evangelist) 356
Johnson, Laura 401
Johnson, Robert 401
Johnson, Richard 45
Johnson, Samuel 104
Johnson, Uwe 416–417
Joseph, Gloria 233
Jouhy, Ernest 177
Jünger, Jürgen 146

Kagan, Robert 331
Kaldor, Mary 334
Kamen, Henry 476
Kan, Aleksander Sergeevich 180
Kant, Immanuel 138, 177, 217, 262, 295, 329, 410–411
Kaplan, Temma 317
Kardelj, Edvard 5
Kautsky, Karl 4, 13–14, 28, 136, 143, 207, 223, 254, 342–343
Kelle, Vladislav Zhanovich 432
Keller, Evelyn Fox 232, 469
Kelley-Wischnewetzky, Florence 46
Kennedy, Mary 400
Keohane, Robert Owen 329–330
Kern, Horst 168
Kessler, Suzanne 230
Keynes, John Maynard 453
Khalatbari, Parviz 180
Khan, Reza (Shah Pahlavi) 100
Khrushchev, Nikita Sergeyevich 68
Kieckhefer, Richard 465
Kierkegaard, Søren 414
Kindleberger, Charles 329
Kirchheimer, Otto 54
Kirchhoff, Alfred 248
Kirchhoff, Rolf 145
Kissinger, Henry 247
Kjellén, Rudolf 249
Klaus, Georg 145
Klein, Naomi 124
Klimaszewsky, Günter 145
Kliwansky, Semion 207
Klüber, Franz 149
Kluge, Alexander 208, 415–416
Kluge, Ulrich 6
Klump, Rainer 216
Klussmann, Paul Gerhard 268
Kofler, Leo 150, 267
Kofman, Sarah 234
Kohler-Koch, Beate 330
Köhn, Jens 426
Koivisto, Juha 369–370

Kollontai, Alexandra Mikhailovna 317
Königsdorf, Helga 171
Konnertz, Ursula 171
Kopf, Eike 27
Korsch, Karl 14, 145, 208, 254
Kortüm, Friedrich 80
Kosík, Karel 185, 188
Kosing, Alfred 363
Kössler, Reinhart 96–97, 179
Kossok, Manfred 276, 424
Kovalevsky, Maxim Maximovich 425
Kowalson, Matwej 432
Krader, Lawrence 425
Kramer, Heinrich (Institor) 472–473
Kramer, Kirsten 463
Krasner, Stephen David 330
Krauthammer, Charles 330
Kreutz, Maren 402
Kreye, Otto 59–60
Kristeva, Julia 178, 234
Kröber, Günter 145
Krüger, Peter 247
Krugman, Paul 121
Krumpel, Heinz 176
Kuczynski, Jürgen 190, 267
Kugelmann, Ludwig 13, 15, 20–21
Kuhn, Annette 234
Kuroń, Jacek 71
Küttler, Wolfgang 426–427, 430–432
Kuznets, Simon *84*

Labica, Georges x, 113, 210, 367, 369, 379
Labouvie, Eva 477
Labriola, Antonio 136, 180, 362–363, 367–371, 376–380
Lacan, Jacques 230, 234
Laclau, Ernesto 26, 97, 133, 178
Lacoste, Yves 246–247
Ladurie, Emmanuel Le Roy 476
Lafargue, Laura 17, 29, 263
Lafargue, Paul 17
Lahtinen, Mikko 112
Lambrecht, Lars 432
Lamphere, Louise 233
Lanczkowski, Günter 203
Land, Rainer 169
Lange, Oskar 445
Lange-Vester, Andrea 62
Laqueur, Thomas 239
Larner, Christina 464
Lassalle, Ferdinand *264*, 340
Lauretis, Teresa de 232
Lavrov, Pyotr Lavrovich 28–29, 31, 34
Lazzarato, Maurizio 312
Lebowitz, Michael A. 42
Leclerc, Charles Victoire Emmanuel 275
Lecourt, Dominique 113
Lefebvre, Henri 156, 188
Leff, Enrique 83
Legien, Carl *53*
LeGuin, Ursula K. 385
Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm 137, 261, 410
Lenin, Vladimir Ilyich 4, *31*, 45, 49, 54, 67–69, 100, 105–107, 109–113, 130, 144, 169, 180–181, 186–187, 197, 207, 223, 264, 282–283, 319, 343–344, 363, 365, 369, 372–374, 412, 431
Leonard Barker, Diana 401
Leonhardt, Rolf 70
Leontiev, Aleksei Nikolayevich 374, 418
Leontiev, Lev Abramovich 14
Lerner, Gerda 239
LeRoy, Gaylord C. 210
Lessing, Gotthold Ephraim 137, *264*, 295
Lewis, Gail 233
Lewis, Jill 233
Lewis, John *41–42*
Levack, Brian 477
Lévi-Strauss, Claude 230
Leys, Colin 51, 131
Lie, Merete 403
Liebknecht, Wilhelm 3, 354
Lietz, Barbara 21
Lindemann, Gesa 240
Linden, Robin Ruth 229
Lindow, Megan 83
Link, Werner 255
Lipietz, Alain 60, 83, 87, 287, 454
List, Elisabeth 171, 310
List, Friedrich 160
Little, Ian 132
Lo Piparo, Franco 283
Lojkine, Jean 62
Lopatin, German Alexandrovich 17
Lorber, Judith 241–242
Lorde, Audre 233
Lotman, Jury Mikhajlovich 373
Louverture, Toussaint 11, 274–275

Löwy, Michael 210–211
Lübbe, Hermann 416
Lukács, Georg 145–146, 187–188, 207–209, 260, 264–269, 296, 300–302, 364, 372
Lumley, Robert 288
Luttwak, Edward Nicolae 255
Lutz, Burkart 59, 392
Luxemburg, Rosa 15, 30, 45, 48–49, 53–54, 101, 106, 144, 197–198, 207, 223, 299, 342–344, 378–379, 391–392, 416, 444

MacCabe, Colin 116
MacCormack, Carol P. 233
Macfarlane, Alan D.J. 463–464
Machiavelli, Niccolò 105, 110–111
Mackinder, Halford 248–250
MacKinnon, Catherine 231–232
Maidansky, Andrey 373
Maihofer, Andrea 239, 244
Mahan, Alfred T. 248–249
Mahnkopf, Birgit 122, 225, 255, 393, 401, 453, 455
Malandrino, Corrado 176
Mall, Ram Adhar 176
Mallet, Edme-François 295
Mallet, Louis 218
Mallet, Serge 58
Mama, Amina 233
Mamardashvili, Merab 373
Manacorda, Paola 403
Mandel, Ernest 52, 130, 180
Mandrou, Robert 475
Mann, Thomas 266
Mao Zedong 5, 69–70, 131, 146, 372
Marcuse, Herbert 188, 266, 412, 415, 417
Mariátegui, José Carlos 419
Marini, Ruy Mauro 130
Markov, Walter 294–295
Marković, Mihailo 210
Marks, Elaine 234
Maron, Monika 171
Martin, Hans-Peter 122, 225
Martín de Castañega 468
Martínez Alier, Joan 88
Marx, Karl x, xiii, 1–4, 13–35, 40–47, 49, 51, *53*, 58, 62–63, 75–76, 98, *104*, 105, 108–113, 116, 125, 130, 133, 136–146, 150–153, 155, 158–172, 178–180, 185–188, 192–201, 203–208, 210–211, 218–222, 228–231, 250–254, 260–264, 281–282, 288, 292–293, 296–298, 301, 304–310, 312–313, 324–328, 331, 333, 339–341, 349, 352–353, 356–360, 362–372, 375–380, 391–394, 398–399, 402, 412, 423–432, 436–446, 448–451
Marxhausen, Thomas 13, 203
Massardo, Jaime 380
Massarrat, Mohssen 82, 88–89, 92
Matthew (Evangelist) 149
Maull, Otto 250
Maurer, Andrea 152
Maurer, Georg Ludwig von 425
Mayer, Hans 209, 268
McCullagh, Roslyn 155
McEachern, Doug 99, 101
McKenna, Wendy 230
McLennan, Greg 288
Mearsheimer, John Joseph 247
Meek, Ronald 445
Mehring, Franz 13, 15, 207, 260, 264–267
Meillassoux, Claude 198–199
Melber, Henning 177
Mérimée, Prosper 265
Métayer, Gérard 403
Methe, Wolfgang 80
Meulenbelt, Anja 240
Michelet, Jules 463, 474
Michels, Robert 47
Midelfort, H.C. Erik 465
Mies, Maria 101, 123–124, 155, 199, 393, 402
Mikhaylovsky, Nikolay Konstantinovich 26
Mill, James *166*
Mill, John Stuart 23, 217
Mills, C. Wright 57
Miskewitsch, Larissa 28
Missbach, Andreas 80, 83, 87, 89–91
Mitchell, Juliet 155, 234
Mitrany, David 3, 5
Miyakawa, Akira 17
Modugno, Enzo 314
Modzelewski, Karol 71
Mohanty, Chandra Talpade 233
Mohr, Heinrich 268
Moi, Toril 234
Möller, Carola 311
Money, John 229

Monod, Elsbeth 403
Montaigne, Michel de 463
Moody, Kim 122
Moore (Jr.), Barrington 267
Moore, Samuel 19, 28
Mooser, Josef 57
Moraga, Cherríe 233
Morawetz, David 132
Morawski, Jill G. 230
More, Thomas 352
Morfino, Vittorio 111
Morgan, Lewis Henry 425
Morgenthau, Hans J. 247
Morgner, Irmtraud 171, 461
Morishima, Michio 446
Morse, Edward L. 328
Moss, Norman 91
Most, Johann 14, 19
Moulián, Tomás 59
Moulier Boutang, Yann 313
Mulhern, Francis 116
Müller, Heiner 170, 267, 269
Mun, Thomas 215
Müntzer, Thomas 295

Narain, Sunita 87
Narski, Igor Sergeyevich 210
Necker, Jacques 295
Negri, Antonio 255, 304–305, 311–314
Negt, Oskar 152, 155–156, 208, 415–416
Neumann, John von 446
Neusüß, Christel 155, 171
Newton, Esther 243
Nicholas II (Nikolai Alexandrovich Romanov) 106
Nicholas Nikolaevich of Russia (1856–1929) 308
Nicholson, Linda 239
Nicomachus *159*
Niethammer, Lutz 419
Nolte, Ernst 55, 268
North, Dudley 216
Nyerere, Julius Kambarage 131

O'Connor, James 85, 456–457
Oakley, Ann 400
Obst, Erich 250
Oehlke, Paul 58
Ogé, Vincent 273
Oittinen, Vesa 373
Oldridge, Darren 465
Ollman, Bertell 14
Olson, Margarethe 403
Omura, Izumi 27
Opitz, Claudia XI
Opitz, Reinhard 56
Oppolzer, Alfred 210
Oresme, Nicholas 105
Ortner, Sherry B. 233
Ortu, Giangiacomo 420
Osterkamp, Ute 374
Ó Tuathail, Gearóid 247
Owen, Robert 162, 168, 312
Ozouf, Mona 277

Padmore, George 9, 11
Palmerston (Henry John Temple) 253
Panayotakis, Costas 85, 92
Panitch, Leo 51
Parmar, Pratibha 233
Paul (Apostle) 149, 296
Peirce, Charles Sanders 232
Perroux, François 131
Peschel, Oscar 248
Petty, William 352, 449
Phizacklea, Annie 404–405
Picasso, Pablo 293
Pietz, William 203
Pinkus, Theo 52, 372
Piva, Paola 403
Plato 158, 364, 410
Plaza, Monique 234
Plekhanov, Georgi Valentinovich 180, 306, 343, 369, 371–372, 376–377
Plessner, Helmuth 266
Plöse, Renate 424
Poe, Edgar Allan 469
Pohl, Sigrid 441
Polanyi, Karl 121, 331
Pongratz, Hans J. 405
Ponte, Lowell 77–78
Popitz, Heinrich 57
Pötzscher, Hubert 210
Poulantzas, Nicos 52, 54, 59, 112–113, 115, 267, 287, 432
Prebisch, Raúl 130–131
Preobrazhensky, Yevgeni Alekseyevich 6
Přibram, Karl 216

Priester, Karin 288
Prince-Smith, John 219
Proudhon, Pierre-Joseph 162, 297, 340
Proust, Marcel 414–415

Quesnay, François 216, 352

Radke, Volker 85
Ramonet, Ignacio 127, 457
Rattansi, Ali 160
Ratzel, Friedrich 247–248, 250, 254
Raynal, Guillaume Thomas François 274
Redlow, Götz 145
Reich, Jens 269
Reichelt, Helmut 445
Reimer, Nick 88–89
Reinhold, Otto 69
Reinicke, Wolfgang H. 121
Reisin, Fanny-Michaela 456
Reiter, Rayna Rapp 233
Resnick, Stephen 200
Revelli, Marco 123
Rey, Pierre-Philippe 97
Ribeiro, Silvia 394
Ricardo, David 151, 216–217, 221, 223, 329, 352, 437, 443, 449–450
Richter, Emanuel 218
Richter Gudrun 403
Rifkin, Jeremy 305, 311
Rigaud, André 274
Riis, Jacob 399
Roberts, J. Timmons 85
Robespierre, Maximilien 274
Robinson, Joan 437–438, 446
Rochambeau, Jean 275
Rodbertus, Johann Karl 352, 443
Röder, Karl-Heinz 218
Rodney, Walter 11, 131
Rommelspacher, Birgit 240
Roosevelt, Franklin D. 55–56, 348
Rosaldo, Michelle Zimbalist 233
Rosdolsky, Roman Osipovich 445
Rose, Hilary 231, 293
Rosecrance, Richard 454
Rosenau, James N. 121
Rosenberg, Justin 114, 255
Rosental, Mark Moisevich 210
Rostow, Walt Whitman 130
Roth, Roland 392
Röttger, Bernd 456
Rousseau, Jean-Jacques 150, 265
Rowbotham, Sheila 155, 401
Roy, Joseph 17–18, 310
Roy, Manabendra Nath 131
Rubel, Maximilien 16
Ruben, Peter 145
Rubin, Gayle 230–233
Rubin, Isaak Illich 359, 444
Ruggie, John 453
Ruf, Anja 122, 406
Rupert, Mark 254
Rusch, Gebhard 420
Rweyemamu, Justinian 131

Sablowski, Thomas 394, 454
Sachs, Hans 309
Sachs, Jeffrey 126
Sacristán, Manuel 379
Sagan, Carl 293
Said, Edward 176
Saikin, Oleg Alexeyevich 17
Saint-Simon, Claude-Henri de 150
Sander, Christel 13
Sandner, Gerhard 250
Sandoval, Chela 233
Sardemann, Gerhard 79
Say, Jean-Baptiste 304–305, 307–308, 312
Sayers, Janet 230
Scaron, Pedro 17
Scheer, Hermann (1944–2010) 86–87, 89
Scherrer, Christoph 122
Schiller, Friedrich 260, 262, 264, 294
Schlegel, Friedrich 260
Schlieffen, Alfred von *253*
Schmidt, Alfred 251
Schmidt, Max 68
Schmidt, Siegfried J. 418
Schmitt, Carl 249–250
Schneider, Michael 269
Schneider, Sigfried 391
Schoeps, Julius H. 247
Scholze, Siegfried 317–321
Schratz-Hadwich, Barbara 385, 388
Schreiber, Sebastian 225
Schumann, Harald 122, 225
Schumann, Michael 168
Schumm, Wilhelm 454

Schurig, Volker 146, 374
Schwarz, Wolfgang 68
Schweitzer, Johann Baptist von 340
Scitovsky, Tibor 132
Scott, Joan W. 384
Scott, Maurice 132
Scott, Patricia Bell 233
Scott, Walter 265
Seccombe, Wally 114, 155
Segbers, Franz 211
Seidel, Helmut 373
Seifried, Dieter 86, 91
Seitz, K. 454
Semmel, Bernard 248–249
Sen, Jai 301
Senior, Nassau William 24, 307
Sennett, Richard 60–61
Serfati, Claude 126
Sève, Lucien 146
Shaikh, Anwar M. 454
Sherman, Howard 445
Shiva, Vandana 101, 393
Shivji, Issa G. 131
Shotter, John 384, 386
Sieger, Robert 248
Silverblatt, Irene 469
Sismondi, Jean Charles Léonard de 24, 150
Skambraks, Hannes 14–15
Sloterdijk, Peter 208
Smith, Adam 150, 152, 159–160, 206, 216–217, 304, 306–309, 326, 352, 448–450, 453
Smith, Barbara 233
Smith, Dorothy 170–171, 231
Socrates 158
Soell, Hartmut 252
Sofoulis, Zoe 233
Sohn-Rethel, Alfred 171–172
Soldan, Wilhelm Gottlieb 474
Sombart, Werner 29
Song, Young-Bae 179
Sonthonax, Léger-Félicité 274
Sorel, Georges 304, 369
Sorge, Friedrich Adolf 13, 18–19, 24, 27, 30, 368
Soros, George 121
Sowell, Thomas 445
Spaemann, Robert 182
Spelman, Elizabeth V. 240
Spraos, John 133
Sprengel, Rainer 249
Sraffa, Piero 446
Stäbler, Eva 402
Staël, Germaine de 260
Stalin, Joseph Vissarionovich 6, 53, 68–69, 71, 78, 96, 100, 145, 181, 187, 283, *320*, 324, 345–346, 372–373, 431
Stanislaw, Joseph 62
Stanley, Liz 384
Staud, Toralf 88–89
Stein, Lorenz von 53
Steiner, Helmut 57
Stendhal (Marie-Henri Beyle) 265
Stephenson, Niamh 385, 387
Stern, Nicholas 84, *87*, *90*
Sternberg, Fritz 15
Stetsenko, Anna 374
Stiehler, Gottfried 145
Stinnes, Hugo *53*
Stirner, Max (Johann Caspar Schmidt) 105
Stoller, Robert 229
Storch, Henri 304–306, 308–309
Strathern, Marilyn 233
Strausz-Hupé, Robert 247
Struve, Petr Berngardovich *180*
Studer, Herlinde 171
Stürmer, Michael 268
Subcomandante Marcos 310–311, 419
Sun Tzu 324
Sunkel, Osvaldo 130
Sutcliffe, Bob 57, 59
Sweezy, Paul M. 224
Szentes, Tamás 133

Tamás, Gáspár Miklós 70–71
Tate, Jane 401
Teiwes-Kügler, Christel 62
Teschke, Benno 251, 333
Teubner, Ulrike 238
Texier, Jacques 282
Thalheimer, August 264
Thatcher, Margaret 399
Thomas Aquinas 159, 468
Thomas, Clive 131
Thomas, Keith 475, 477
Thomasius, Christian 474

Thompson, Edward P. 41, 63, 189–190
Thorne, Barrie 230
Thorner, Alice 96
Thucydides 281, 324
Tjaden, Karl Hermann 431
Togliatti, Palmiro 347
Tökei, Ferenc 426
Trotsky, Leo 106, 180, 187, 345
Trouillot, Michel-Rolph 276–277
Tuchscheerer, Walter 210
Tugan-Baranovsky, Mikhail Ivanovich 443, 445
Tullock, Gordon 329
Turgot, Anne Robert Jacques 352

Udry, Charles-André 126
Ulbricht, Walter 69

Vakaloulis, Michel 314
van der Pijl, Kees 255, 326, 332, 335
Varga, Eugen 55
Vedel, Gitte 403
Vester, Michael 62–63
Vico, Giambattista 104, 368, 386
Virno, Paolo 312
Vogel, Lise 442
Vollgraf, Carl-Erich 14, 29, 31, 34
Vollmar, Georg von 4
Vološinov, Valentin Nikolayevich 44
Voltaire (François-Marie Arouet) 177, 265
Voss, G. Günter 405
Vowinkel, Kurt 249
Vygotsky, Lev Semyonovich 374, 385

Wagner, Adolph 19
Wagner, Robert Ferdinand *56*
Wahl, Peter 123
Waldheim, Kurt 293
Walker, Alice 233
Walker, R.B.J. 247
Wallerstein, Immanuel 58, 133, 176, 254
Wallis, Victor 84–85
Walpen, Bernhard 62
Walpurga *321*, *461-462*
Walter, N. 454
Waltz, Kenneth 247, 329
Walzer, Michael 152
Ware, Celestine 233
Warren, Bill 133, 178
Waterman, Peter 301
Weart, Spencer R. 79
Weber, Max 41, 126
Weber, Melanie 82
Wehler, Hans-Ulrich 247
Weingart, Peter 91
Weiss, Peter 416
Werlhof, Claudia von 101, 155, 199, 392
Wertsch, James V. 384
West, Candace 230, 241
Wetterer, Angelika 238–239, 241
Weyand, Klaus 137
Weydemeyer, Joseph 40, 51
Whitehead, Harriet 233
Wichterich, Christa 122, 401, 403
Wielenga, Bastiaan 96
Wight, Martin 328
Wildermuth, Armin 203
Wilhelm II (German Emperor) 317
Wille, Christian 374
Williams, Eric 11, 277
Williams, Raymond 44
Williamson, Hugh 77
Willis, Paul 169, 189
Wittfogel, Karl August 76, 254, 264–265
Wittich, Dieter 343–344
Wittig, Monique 234
Wolf, Christa 171, 269, 416–417
Wolf-Graaf, Anke 171
Wolff, Christian 137
Wolff, Richard 200
Wolkowitz, Carol 155, 401, 404–405
Wolpe, AnnMarie 234
Wolpe, Harold 97, 432
Wright, Richard 11
Wright, Steve 311
Wu Yuanliang 375
Wurms, Renate 318–319, 321
Wygodski, Witali Solomonowitsch 14, 28, 34

Xenophon of Athens 158

Yergin, Daniel 62
Young, Brigitte 401
Young, Kate 155
Young, Iris Marion 155, 230

Zahn, Lola 150
Zamora, José A. 415
Zarembka, Paul 393
Zasulich, Vera Ivanovna 26, 178, 426, 430–431
Zetkin, Clara 317–319
Zeuske, Michael 276
Zhang Yibing 356, 375–376
Zimmermann, Don H. 230, 241
Zimmermann, Jan 403
Zschaler, Frank 19
Zürn, Michael 121

The *Historical-Critical Dictionary of Marxism (HCDM)* is a comprehensive Marxist lexicon, which in the nine German-language volumes concluded so far has involved over 800 scholars from around the globe. Conceived by philosopher Wolfgang Fritz Haug in 1983, the first volume of the ongoing lexicon project was published in 1994. This second volume of selected articles in English translation offers readers a further sample of the HCDM's wide scope of terms: besides Marxist concepts, approached from a plural standpoint and stressing feminist, ecological, and internationalist perspectives, it boasts entries on the histories of social movements, theoretical schools, as well as cultural, political, philosophical, and aesthetic debates.

Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Dr., Dr. h. c., is Professor of Philosophy (retired) at the Free University Berlin. He published many monographs, amongst others on Philosophy of Praxis, High-tech Capitalism, Plural Marxism. His *Critique of Commodity Aesthetics* appeared in English in 1986 (University of Minnesota Press).

Frigga Haug, Dr., Dr. h. c., is Professor of Sociology (retired) at Hamburg University. She published many monographs, amongst others on Marxism-Feminism and Rosa Luxemburg. She is the author of *Female Sexualization* (Verso, 1987) and *Beyond female masochism: memory-work and politics* (Verso, 1980).

Peter Jehle, Dr., is Associate Professor of Romance Studies at Potsdam University. He is co-editor of Antonio Gramsci's Prison Notebooks in German and published monographs on Gramsci, Werner Krauss, and Cultural Hegemony in the French and Spanish Enlightenment.

Wolfgang Küttler (died in 2024), Dr. Dr., led the department Theory and Methodology of Historical Science at the Central Institute for History (Academy of Sciences, GDR). He published many monographs, amongst others on formation theory in the late Karl Marx and in Lenin, on the philosophy of history and methodology of historiography.

Oliver Walkenhorst, diploma in physics, worked as a scientist from 2002 to 2013 at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research. From 2008 to 2021 he was an editorial board member of the journal *Das Argument*. Since 2007, he is an editorial board member, since 2013 coordinator, and since 2023 co-editor of the HKWM.

ISSN: 1570-1522
ISBN: 978-90-04-75495-9

brill.com/hm

BRILL